

LOVE POEMS



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LOVE POEMS

BY

FAMOUS AUTHORS



"All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame."

2854

—SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

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Love Poems.

A LOVE DREAM.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
A Ditty	5
On a Girdle	6
Love alters not	6
At the Church Gate	7
Britain's Ida	8
Romeo and Juliet	9
To Celia	14
Why so Wan and Pale?	15
À Ma Future	15
Serenade — Ah, Sweet! thou little knowest	17
Àe Fond Kiss	17
Highland Mary	18
Come, rest in this Bosom	20
She was a Phantom of Delight	20
She walks in Beauty	21
Ruth	22
When we Two parted	23
To the Lady Hamilton	24
Angel and Woman	25
Immortality of Love	26
From "The Angel in the House"	26
A Red, Red Rose	29
Drama	30
The Indian Serenade	30
To Lucasta, On going to the Wars	31
'Tis Sweet to think	32
The Evening Time	33
Lines	34
Eros	35
The Day-Dream	35
The Flower o' Dumblane	36
When Stars are in the Quiet Skies	37

	PAGE
Love's Thread of Gold	38
Millais's "Huguenots"	39
Good-Night	43
Hearts	43
A Heart for Every One	44
I waited till the Twilight	45
Rest	46
Twin Stars Aloft	47
Love took me softly by the Hand	48
Song—Nay, but you	49
Song—When Sparrows build	49
Destiny	51
Light	51
Cupid's Arrow	52
Two Lovers	53
The Low-backed Car	54
Come into the Garden, Maud	56
Sonnets	59
Because	61
The Banks of Doon	62
I love my Jean	63
A Valediction	63
A Chain	65
Love wakes and weeps	67
In Three Days	68
The Bonnie Wee Thing	69
Annie Laurie	70
I'll never love thee more	71
Rosalind's Madrigal	72
Song—Pack Clouds away	74
Song—Ask me no more	75
The Passionate Shepherd to his Love	75
Move Eastward, Happy Earth	76
Serenade—Now the Toils of Day are over	77
My Star	78
When thou art near me	78
One Morning, Oh! so Early	79
Before the Daybreak	80
A Warning	81
To Mary	82

	PAGE
The Invitation	83
The Miller's Daughter	85
A Voice by the Cedar Tree	86
Divided	87
A Bird-Song	92
To Althea, from Prison	93
Songs from the Princess	94
Song of the Violet	96
Love in a Life	97
Love	98
Life in a Love	99
Not ours the Vows	99
For the Future	100
Comfort	102
Seven Times Three. Love	103
The Violet	104
Song — In Love, if Love be Love	105
One Way of Love	105
Switzerland	106
Evelyn Hope	120
Song — Oh, say not, my Love	122
Wisteria	123
Sonnet	125
Married Lovers	126
How Many Times	128
James Lee's Wife	128
The Poet's Bridal-Day Song	132
My Lady Singing	134
Madrigal	135
York and Lancaster	135
Jeanie Morrison	136
I met wi' her I luv'd Yestereen	139
A Woman's Question	140
A Woman's Answer	142
True or False	144
I saw thee weep	147
Origin of Love	148
The Dream	148
Love	156
All for Love	160

	PAGE
The Lost Love	161
The True Beauty	163
To Dianeme	163
Blind Love	165
Where shall the Lover rest?	165
A Birthday	168
From "The Winter's Tale"	168
Sonnets from the Portuguese	169
From "The Epithalamium"	173
A Complaint	174
To Anthea	175
Passages from "Paradise Lost"	176
Song — I prithee send me back my Heart	178
A Match	178
Lines	180
If to thy Heart I were as near	181
Caeli	182
Gathered Roses	182
The Time I've lost in wooing	182
John Anderson, my Jo	183
Faded Leaves	184
Urania	186
Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere	187
Guinevere	189
Altho' thou maun never be mine	191
Changes	192
Two Loves	193
King and Slave	195
Love	196
Fidelis	196
A Love Token	198
To Mary in Heaven	199
Margaret alone at her Spinning-Wheel	200
Margaret to Dolcino	202
Dolcino to Margaret	202
Love's Omnipresence	203
Inclusions	204
Insufficiency	205
Translations from Heinrich Heine	205
Tristram and Iseult	209

LOVE POEMS.



LOVE rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below, and saints above,
For love is heaven and heaven is love.

The Lay of the Last Minstrel.



A DITTY.

My true-love hath my heart and I have his,
By just exchange one to the other given ;
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss ;
There never was a better bargain driven :
My true-love hath my heart, and I have his.

His heart in me keeps him and me in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides ;
He loves my heart, for once it was his own,
I cherish his, because in me it bides :
My true-love hath my heart, and I have his.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

ON A GIRDLE.

THAT which her slender waist confined
Shall now my joyful temples bind :
No monarch but would give his crown,
His arms might do what this hath done.

It was my heaven's extremest sphere,
The pale which held that lovely deer ;
My joy, my grief, my hope, my love,
Did all within this circle move!

A narrow compass! and yet there
Dwelt all that's good, and all that's fair :
Give me but what this ribbon bound,
Take all the rest the sun goes round.

EDMUND WALLER.



LOVE ALTERS NOT.

LET me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove :—

O no! it is an ever fixèd mark
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken ;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be
taken.

Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come ;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom : —

If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

AT THE CHURCH GATE.

ALTHOUGH I enter not,
Yet round about the spot
 Oft-times I hover :
And near the sacred gate,
With longing eyes I wait,
 Expectant of her.

The Minster bell tolls out
Above the city's rout,
 And noise and humming :
They've hushed the Minster bell ;
The organ 'gins to swell :
 She's coming, she's coming!

My lady comes at last,
Timid, and stepping fast,
 And hastening hither,
With modest eyes downcast :
She comes — she's here — she's past :
 May heaven go with her!

Kneel undisturbed, fair saint!
Pour out your praise or plaint
 Meekly and duly;
I will not enter there
To sully your pure prayer
 With thoughts unruly.

But suffer me to pace
Round the forbidden place,
 Lingering a minute
Like outcast spirits who wait
And see through heaven's gate
 Angels within it.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY.



BRITAIN'S IDA.

LOVE is life's end; an end but never ending;
 All joys, all sweets, all happiness awarding;
Love is life's wealth (ne'er spent but ever spending),
 Love's life's reward, rewarded in rewarding:
Then from thy wretched heart fond care remove.
Ah! shouldst thou live but once love's sweets to
 prove,
Thou wilt not love to live, unless thou live to love.

EDMUND SPENSER.

ROMEO AND JULIET.

Rom. — He jests at scars that never felt a wound.

JULIET appears above at a window.

But soft! What light through yonder window breaks!

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!

Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,

Who is already sick and pale with grief,

That thou, her maid, art far more fair than she.

Be not her maid, since she is envious;

Her vestal livery is but sick and green,

And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.

It is my lady; Oh! it is my love:

Oh, that she knew she were!

She speaks, yet she says nothing: what of that?

Her eye discourses: I will answer it.

I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks.

Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,

Having some business, do entreat her eyes

To twinkle in their spheres till they return.

What if her eyes were there, they in her head?

The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,

As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven

Would through the airy region stream so bright,

That birds would sing, and think it were not night.

See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!

Oh, that I were a glove upon that hand,

That I might touch that cheek!

Ful. Ay, me!

LOVE POEMS.

Rom. She speaks!

Oh, speak again, bright angel! for thou art
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,
As is a wingèd messenger of heaven
Unto the white-upturned wond'ring eyes
Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him,
When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds,
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

Ful. Oh, Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou
Romeo?

Deny thy father, and refuse thy name:
Or if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

Rom. Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

Ful. 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy:
Thou art thyself though, not a Montague.
What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face — nor any other part
Belonging to a man. Oh, be some other name!
What's in a name? That which we call a rose,
By any other name would smell as sweet.
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called,
Retain that dear perfection which he owes,
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name;
And for that name, which is no part of thee,
Take all myself!

Rom. I take thee at thy word:
Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized;
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

Ful. What man art thou, that thus, bescreened
in night,
So stumblest on my counsel?

Rom. By a name

I know not how to tell thee who I am :

My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself,

Because it is an enemy to thee.

Had I it written, I would tear the word.

Ful. My ears have yet not drunk a hundred
words

Of that tongue's utterance, yet I know the sound.

Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?

Rom. Neither, fair saint, if either thee dislike.

Ful. How cam'st thou hither, tell me, and
wherefore?

The orchard walls are high, and hard to climb ;

And the place death, considering who thou art,

If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

Rom. With love's light wings did I o'er-perch
these walls,

For stony limits cannot hold love out ;

And what love can do, that dares love attempt :

Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me.

Ful. If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

Rom. Alack! there lies more peril in thine eye

Than twenty of their swords ; look thou but sweet,

And I am proof against their enmity.

Ful. I would not for the world they saw thee
here.

Rom. I have night's cloak to hide me from their
sight ;

And but thou love me, let them find me here ;

My life were better ended by their hate,

Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.

Ful. By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

Rom. By love, who first did prompt me to inquire ;

He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.

I am no pilot ; yet, wert thou as far

As that vast shore washed with the farthest sea,

I would adventure for such merchandise.

Ful. Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,

Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek

For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.

Fain would I dwell on form ; fain, fain deny

What I have spoke — but farewell compliment!

Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say — Ay :

And I will take thy word. Yet, if thou swear'st,

Thou may'st prove false : at lovers' perjuries,

They say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo!

If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully ;

Or, if thou think'st I am too quickly won,

I'll frown and be perverse, and say thee nay,

So thou wilt woo : but, else, not for the world.

In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,

And therefore thou may'st think my 'havior light ;

But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true

Than those that have more cunning to be strange.

I should have been more strange, I must confess,

But that thou overheard'st, ere I was 'ware,

My true love's passion ; therefore pardon me,

And not impute this yielding to light love,

Which the dark night hath so discovered.

Rom. Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear,
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops —

Ful. O swear not by the moon, the inconstant
moon,
That monthly changes in her circled orb :
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

Rom. What shall I swear by?

Ful. Do not swear at all ;
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
Which is the god of my idolatry,
And I'll believe thee.

Rom. If my heart's dear love —

Ful. Well, do not swear! Although I joy in
thee,
I have no joy of this contract to-night ;
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden,
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
'Ere one can say — It lightens. Sweet, good-night!
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.
Good-night, good-night! — as sweet repose and rest
Come to thy heart, as that within my breast!

Rom. Oh, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

Ful. What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?

Rom. The exchange of thy love's faithful vow
for mine.

Ful. I gave thee mine, before thou didst request
it :

And yet I would it were to give again.

Rom. Would'st thou withdraw it? for what purpose, love?

Ful. But to be frank, and give it thee again.
And yet I wish but for the thing I have :
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep ; the more I give to thee,
The more I have ; for both are infinite.
I hear some noise within. Dear love, adieu!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.



TO CELIA.

DRINK to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine ;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I'll not ask for wine.

The thirst, that from the soul doth rise,
Doth ask a drink divine ;
But might I of Jove's nectar sip,
I would not change for thine.

I sent thee, late, a rosy wreath,
Not so much honoring thee,
As giving it a hope that there
It could not withered be.

But thou thereon didst only breathe
And sent'st it back to me ;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself, but thee.

BEN JONSON.

SERENADE.

AH, sweet! thou little knowest how
I wake, and passionate watches keep;
And yet while I address thee now,
Methinks thou smilest in thy sleep.
'Tis sweet enough to make me weep
That tender thought of love and thee,
That while the world is hushed so deep
Thy soul's perhaps awake to me.

Sleep on, sleep on, sweet bride of sleep,
With golden visions for thy dower,
While I this midnight vigil keep,
And bless thee in thy silent bower;
To me 'tis sweeter than the power
Of sleep, and fairy dreams unfurled,
That I alone, at this still hour,
In patient love outwatch the world.

THOMAS HOOD.

AE FOND KISS.

Æ fond kiss, and then we sever;
Æ fareweel, alas! forever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.
Who shall say that fortune grieves him,
While the star of hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me;
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
Naething could resist my Nancy ;
But to see her was to love her ;
Love but her and love forever.
Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met — or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare-thee-weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare-thee-weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure!
Ae fond kiss, and then we sever ;
Ae fareweel, alas! forever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.

ROBERT BURNS.



HIGHLAND MARY.

YE banks, and braes, and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There Simmer first unfauld your robes,
And there the langest tarry ;
For there I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloomed the gay green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade
I clasped her to my bosom!
The golden hours, on angel wings,
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me, as light and life,
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' monie a vow, and locked embrace,
Our parting was fu' tender;
And, pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursels asunder;
But oh! fell death's untimely frost,
That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary!

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips,
I aft ha'e kiss'd sae fondly!
And closed for aye the sparkling glance
That dwelt on me sae kindly!
And mould'ring now in silent dust,
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

ROBERT BURNS.

COME, REST IN THIS BOSOM.

COME, rest in this bosom, my own stricken deer,
Though the herd have fled from thee, thy home is
still here ;

Here still is the smile, that no cloud can o'ercast,
And a heart and a hand all thy own to the last.

Oh! what was love made for, if 'tis not the same
Through joy and through torment, through glory
and shame?

I know not, I ask not, if guilt's in that heart,
I but know that I love thee, whatever thou art.

Thou hast called me thy Angel in moments of bliss,
And thy Angel I'll be through the horrors of this, —
Through the furnace, unshrinking, thy steps to
pursue,
And shield thee, and save thee, — or perish there
too!

THOMAS MOORE.

"SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT."

SHE was a phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight ;
A lovely apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament ;
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair ;
Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair ;
But all things else about her drawn,
From May-time and the cheerful dawn ;

A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A spirit, yet a woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel light.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY.

SHE walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies,
And all that's best of dark and bright

Meets in her aspect and her eyes :
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half-impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face,
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear, their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent, —
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent.

LORD BYRON.



RUTH.

SHE stood breast high amid the corn,
Clasped by the golden light of morn,
Like the sweetheart of the sun,
Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an autumn flush,
Deeply ripened, — such a blush
In the midst of brown was born,
Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell ;
Which were blackest none could tell,
But long lashes veiled a light,
That had else been all too bright.

And her hat, with shady brim,
Made her tressy forehead dim ; —
Thus she stood amid the stooks,
Praising God with sweetest looks :

Sure, I said, Heaven did not mean
Where I reap thou shouldst but glean ;
Lay thy sheaf adown and come,
Share my harvest and my home.

THOMAS HOOD.



WHEN WE TWO PARTED.

WHEN we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted,
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss ;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow —
I felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.

Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame ;
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear,
A shudder comes o'er me —
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well : —
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met —
In silence I grieve,
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee? —
In silence and tears.

LORD BYRON.



TO THE LADY HAMILTON.

Too late I stayed, — forgive the crime ;
Unheeded flew the hours ;
How noiseless falls the foot of Time,
That only treads on flowers!

What eye with clear account remarks
The ebbing of the glass,
When all its sands are diamond sparks,
That dazzle as they pass!

Oh, who to sober measurement
Time's happy swiftness brings,
When birds of paradise have lent
Their plumage for his wings!

HON. WILLIAM ROBERT SPENCER.



ANGEL AND WOMAN.

"WHEN your beauty appears,
In its graces and airs,
All bright as an angel new-dropt from the skies,
At distance I gaze, and am awed by my fears,
So strangely you dazzle my eyes.

"But when without art
Your kind thoughts you impart,
When your love runs in blushes through every vein,
When it darts from your eyes, when it pants at
your heart, —
Then I know that you're woman again."

"There's a passion and pride
In our sex," she replied,
"And thus might I gratify both, I would do, —
Still an angel appear to each lover beside,
But still be a woman to you."

THOMAS PARNELL.

IMMORTALITY OF LOVE.

THEY sin who tell us love can die,
With life all other passions fly,
All others are but vanity ;
In heaven ambition cannot dwell,
Nor avarice in the vaults of hell ;
Earthly these passions of the earth,
They perish where they have their birth ;
But love is indestructible :
Its holy flame forever burneth ;
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth.
Too oft on earth a troubled guest,
At times deceived, at times oppressed,
It here is tried and purified,
Then hath in heaven its perfect rest :
It soweth here with toil and care,
But the harvest-time of love is there.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.



FROM "THE ANGEL IN THE HOUSE."

To heroism and holiness
How hard it is for man to soar,
But how much harder to be less
Than what his mistress loves him for!
He does with ease what do he must,
Or lose her, and there's nought debarr'd
From him who's call'd to meet her trust,

And credit her desired regard.
Ah, wasteful woman, she that may
On her sweet self set her own price,
Knowing he cannot choose but pay,
How has she cheapen'd paradise ;
How given for nought her priceless gift,
How spoil'd the bread and spill'd the wine,
Which, spent with due, respective thrift,
Had made brutes men and men divine.

O Queen! awake to thy renown,
Require what 'tis our wealth to give,
And comprehend and wear the crown
Of thy despised prerogative!
I who in manhood's name at length
With glad songs come to abdicate
The gross regality of strength,
Must yet in this thy praise abate,
That through thine erring humbleness
And disregard of thy degree,
Mainly, has man been so much less
Than fits his fellowship with thee.
High thoughts had shaped the foolish brow,
The coward had grasp'd the hero's sword,
The vilest had been great, hadst thou.
Just to thyself, been worth's reward :
But lofty honors, undersold,
Seller and buyer both disgrace ;
And favor that makes folly bold
Puts out the light in virtue's face.

*

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Then to my room
I went, and closed and lock'd the door,
And cast myself down on my bed,
And there, with many a blissful tear,
I vow'd to love and pray'd to wed
The Maiden who had grown so dear ;
Thank'd God who had set her in my path ;
And promised, as I hoped to win,
I never would sully my faith
By the least selfishness or sin ;
Whatever in her sight I'd seem
I'd really be ; I'd never blend
With my delight in her a dream
'Twould change her cheek to comprehend ;
And, if she wished it, I'd prefer
Another's to my own success ;
And always seek the best for her
With unofficial tenderness.

Rising, I breathed a brighter clime,
And found myself all self above,
And, with a charity sublime,
Contemned not those who did not love ;
And I could not but feel that then
I shone with something of her grace,
And went forth to my fellow men
My commendation in my face.

* * * * *

She was all mildness ; yet 'twas writ
Upon her beauty legibly,
“ He that's for heaven itself unfit,

Let him not hope to merit me.”
And such a challenge, quite apart
From thoughts of love, humbled, and thus
To sweet repentance moved my heart,
And made me more magnanimous,
And led me to review my life,
Inquiring where in aught the least,
If question were of her for wife,
Ill might be mended, hope increased :
Not that I soared so far above
Myself, as this great hope to dare :
And yet I half foresaw that love
Might hope where reason would despair.

COVENTRY PATMORE.



A RED, RED ROSE.

OH, my luvè's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June!
Oh, my luvè's like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune!

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luvè am I ;
And I will luvè thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun,
And I will luvè thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luvè!
And fare thee weel awhile!
And I will come again, my luvè,
Tho' it were ten thousand mile.

ROBERT BURNS.

DRAMA.

HE stood beside me.
The embodied vision of the brightest dream,
Which like a dawn heralds the day of life ;
The shadow of his presence made my world
A paradise. All familiar things he touched,
All common words he spoke, became to me
Like forms and sounds of a diviner world.
He was as is the sun in his fierce youth,
As terrible and lovely as a tempest ;
He came, and went, and left me what I am.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

THE INDIAN SERENADE.

I ARISE from dreams of thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are shining bright.
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Hath led me — who knows how?
To the chamber window, sweet!

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream —
The champak odors fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream ;
The nightingale's complaint
It dies upon her heart,
As I must die on thine,
Belovèd as thou art!

Oh, lift me from the grass!
I die, I faint, I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast :
Oh! press it close to thine again,
Where it will break at last.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.



TO LUCASTA, ON GOING TO THE WARS.

TELL me not, sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind,
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field ;
And with a stronger faith embrace,
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore ;
I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honor more.

RICHARD LOVELACE.



'TIS SWEET TO THINK.

'Tis sweet to think, that, where'er we may rove,
We are sure to find something blissful and dear,
And that, when we're far from the lips we love,
We've but to make love to the lips we are near.
The heart, like a tendril, accustomed to cling,
Let it grow where it will, cannot flourish alone,
But will lean to the nearest and loveliest thing
It can twine with itself, and make closely its own.
Then, oh! what pleasure, where'er we rove,
To be sure to find something, still, that is dear.
And to know, when far from the lips we love,
We've but to make love to the lips we are near.

'Twere a shame when flowers around us rise,
To make light of the rest, if the rose isn't there ;
And the world's so rich in resplendent eyes,
'Twere a pity to limit one's love to a pair.
Love's wing and the peacock's are nearly alike,
They are both of them bright, but they're change-
able too,
And wherever a new beam of beauty can strike,
It will tincture love's plume with a different hue.

Then oh! what pleasure, where'er we rove,
To be sure to find something still that is dear,
And to know, when far from the lips we love,
We've but to make love to the lips we are near.

THOMAS MOORE.



THE EVENING TIME.

TOGETHER we walked in the evening time,
Above us the sky spread golden and clear,
And he bent his head and looked in my eyes,
As if he held me of all most dear.

Oh! it was sweet in the evening time!

Grayer the light grew and grayer still,
The rooks flitted home through the purple shade;
The nightingales sang where the thorns stood high,
As I walked with him in the woodland glade.

Oh! it was sweet in the evening time!

And our pathway went through fields of wheat;
Narrow that path and rough the way,
But he was near and the birds sang true,
And the stars came out in the twilight gray.

Oh! it was sweet in the evening time!

Softly he spoke of the days long past,
Softly of blessed days to be;
Close to his arm and closer I prest,
The cornfield path was Eden to me.

Oh! it was sweet in the evening time!

And the latest gleams of daylight died ;
My hand in his enfolded lay ;
We swept the dew from the wheat as we passed,
For narrower, narrower, wound the way.
Oh! it was sweet in the evening time.

He looked in the depths of my eyes, and said,
"Sorrow and gladness will come for us, sweet ;
But together we'll walk through the fields of life
Close as we walked through the fields of wheat."
A. C. C.



LINES.

LET other bards of angels sing, —
Bright suns without a spot ;
But thou art no such perfect thing ;
Rejoice that thou art not!

Heed not though none should call thee fair ;
So, Mary, let it be,
If naught in loveliness compare
With what thou art to me.

True beauty dwells in deep retreats,
Whose veil is unremoved
Till heart with heart in concord beats,
And the lover is beloved.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

EROS.

THE sense of the world is short, —
Long and various the report, —
 To love and be beloved ;
Men and gods have not outlearned it ;
And, how oft soe'er they've turned it,
 'Tis not to be improved.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

THE DAY-DREAM.

THE DEPARTURE.

AND on her lover's arm she leant,
And round her waist she felt it fold,
And far across the hills they went
 In that new world which is the old :
Across the hills, and far away
 Beyond their utmost purple rim,
And deep into the dying day
 The happy princess followed him.

“ I'd sleep another hundred years,
 O love, for such another kiss ! ”
“ Oh ! wake forever, love,” she hears,
 “ O love ! 'twas such as this and this.”
And o'er them many a sliding star,
And many a merry wind was borne,
And, streamed through many a golden bar,
 The twilight melted into morn.

"O eyes long laid in happy sleep!"

"O happy sleep, that lightly fled!"

"O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep!"

"O love, thy kiss would wake the dead!"

And o'er them many a flowing range

Of vapor buoyed the crescent bark,

And, rapt through many a rosy change,

The twilight died into the dark.

"A hundred summers! can it be?

And whither goest thou, tell me where?"

"O seek my father's court with me,

For there are greater wonders there!"

And o'er the hills, and far away

Beyond their utmost purple rim,

Beyond the night, across the day,

Through all the world she followed him.

ALFRED TENNYSON.



THE FLOWER O' DUMBLANE.

THE sun has gane down o'er the lofty Ben-Lomond,

And left the red clouds to preside o'er the scene,

While lanely I stray in the calm summer gloamin',

To muse on sweet Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.

How sweet is the brier, wi' its sauft fauldin' blossom!

And sweet is the birk, wi' its mantle o' green:

Yet sweeter and fairer, and dear to this bosom,

Is lovely young Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.

She's modest as ony, and blithe as she's bonny ;
For guileless simplicity makes her its ain ;
And far be the villain, divested of feeling,
Wha'd blight in its bloom the sweet flower o'
Dumblane.

Sing on, thou sweet mavis, thy hymn to the e'en-
ing ;

Thou'rt dear to the echoes of Calderwood glen ;
Sae dear to this bosom, sae artless and winning,
Is charming young Jessie, the flower o' Dum-
blane.

How lost were my days till I met wi' my Jessie !
The sports o' the city seemed foolish and vain ;
I ne'er saw a nymph I would ca' my dear lassie,
Till charmed wi' sweet Jessie, the flower o' Dum-
blane.

Though mine were the station of loftiest grandeur,
Amidst its profusion I'd languish in pain,
And reckon as naething the height o' its splendor,
If wanting sweet Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.

ROBERT TANNAHILL.



WHEN STARS ARE IN THE QUIET SKIES.

WHEN stars are in the quiet skies,
Then most I pine for thee ;
Bend on me then thy tender eyes,
As stars look on the sea !

For thoughts, like waves that glide by night,
Are stillest when they shine.
Mine earthly love lies hushed in light
Beneath the heaven of thine.

There is an hour when angels keep
Familiar watch o'er men,
When coarser souls are wrapped in sleep —
Sweet spirit, meet me then!
There is an hour when holy dreams
Through slumber fairest glide,
And in that mystic hour it seems
Thou shouldst be at my side.

My thoughts of thee too sacred are,
For daylight's common beam;
I can but know thee as my star,
My angel, and my dream!
When stars are in the quiet skies,
Then most I pine for thee;
Bend on me then thy tender eyes,
As stars look on the sea!

EDWARD BULWER.



LOVE'S THREAD OF GOLD.

In the night she told a story,
In the night and all night through,
While the moon was in her glory,
And the branches dropped with dew.

'Twas my life she told, and round it
 Rose the years as from a deep ;
 In the world's great heart she found it,
 Cradled like a child asleep.
 In the night I saw her weaving
 By the misty moonbeam cold,
 All the weft her shuttle cleaving
 With a sacred thread of gold.
 Ah! she wept me tears of sorrow,
 Lulling tears so mystic sweet ;
 Then she wove my last to-morrow,
 And her web lay at my feet.
 Of my life she made the story :
 I must weep — so soon 'twas told!
 But your name did lend it glory,
 And your love its thread of gold!

JEAN INGELOW.



MILLAIS'S "HUGUENOTS."

(To H., playing one of Mendelssohn's "Lieder ohne
 Worte.")

YOUR favorite picture rises up before me,
 Whene'er you play that tune,
 I see two figures standing in a garden
 In the still August noon.

One is a girl's, with pleading face turned upward
 Wild with a great alarm ;

Trembling with haste she binds her 'broidered 'kerchief,
About the other's arm,

Whose face is bent on her with tender pity,
Whose eyes look into hers,
With a deep meaning, though she cannot read it,
Hers are so dim with tears.

What are they saying in the sunny garden,
With summer flowers ablow?
What gives the woman's voice its passionate pleading?
What makes the man's so low?

"See, love," she murmurs, "you shall wear my 'kerchief,
It is the badge I know;
And it shall bear you safely thro' the conflict,
If — if — indeed you go.

"You will not wear it? will not wear my 'kerchief?
Nay! do not tell me why!
I will not listen! If you go without it,
You will go hence to die.

"Hush! do not answer! it is death, I tell you!
Indeed I speak the truth;
You standing there so warm with life and vigor,
So bright with health and youth,

“You would go hence out of the glowing sunshine,
Out of the garden’s bloom,
Out of the living, thinking, feeling present,
Into the unknown gloom!”

Then he makes answer, “Hush, Oh! hush, my darling!

Life is so sweet to me,
So full of hope, you need not bid me guard it,
If such a thing might be!

“If such a thing might be! But *not* thro’ falsehood;
I could not come to you,
I dare not stand here in your pure, sweet presence,
Knowing myself untrue.”

“It is no sin!” the wild voice interrupts him,
“This is no open strife;
Have you not often dreamt a nobler warfare,
In which to spend your life?

“Oh! for my sake, — though but for my sake wear it,
Think what my life would be
If you who gave it first true worth and meaning,
Were taken now from me!

“Think of the long, long days so slowly passing!
Think of the endless years!
I am so young! Must I live out my lifetime
With neither hopes nor fears?”

He speaks again in mournful tones and tender,
But with unswerving faith ;
“ Should not love make us braver, aye, and stronger
Either for life or death ?

“ And life is hardest. Oh ! my love ! my treasure !
If I could bear your part
Of this great sorrow, I would go to meet it
With an unshrinking heart.

“ Child ! child ! I little dreamt in that bright summer,
When first your love I sought,
Of all the future store of woe and anguish
Which I, unknowing, wrought.

“ But you'll forgive me ? yes, you will forgive me,
I know, when I am dead.
I would have loved you — but words have scant
meaning —
God love you now instead ! ”

And there is silence in the sunny garden,
Until with faltering tone,
She sobs, the while still clinging closer to him,
“ Forgive me — go — my own ! ”

So human love and faith by death unshaken,
Mingle their glorious psalm ;
Albeit low, until the passionate pleading
Is hushed in deepest calm.

London Spectator.

GOOD-NIGHT.

"GOOD-NIGHT?" No, love! the night is ill
Which severs those it should unite;
Let us remain together still,—
Then it will be *good* night.

How were the night without thee good,
Though thy sweet wishes wing its flight?
Be it not said, thought, understood,—
Then it will be *good* night.

The hearts that on each other beat
From evening close to morning light
Have nights as good as they are sweet,
But never *say* "Good-night."

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.



HEARTS.

A TRINKET made like a heart, dear,
Of red gold, bright and fine,
Was given to me for a keepsake,
Given to me for mine.

And another heart, warm and tender,
As true as a heart could be;
And every throb that stirred it
Was always and all for me.

Sailing over the waters,
Watching the far blue land,
I dropped my golden heart, dear,
Dropt it out of my hand!

It lies in the cold, blue waters,
Fathoms and fathoms deep,
The golden heart which I promised,
Promised to prize and keep.

Gazing at life's bright visions,
So false, and fair, and new,
I forgot the other heart, dear,
Forgot it and lost it too!

I might seek that heart forever,
I might seek and seek in vain, —
And for one short, careless hour,
I pay with a life of pain.

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER.



A HEART FOR EVERY ONE.

OH, there's a heart for every one,
If every one could find it;
Then up and seek, ere youth is gone,
Whate'er the toil, ne'er mind it;
For if you chance to meet at last
With that one heart, intended
To be a blessing unsurpassed,
Till life itself is ended,

How would you prize the labor done,
How grieve if you resigned it ;
For there's a heart for every one,
If every one could find it!

Two hearts are made, the angels say,
To suit each other dearly ;
But each one takes a different way, —
A way not found so clearly!
Yet though we seek, and seek for years,
The pains are worth the taking,
For what the life of home endears
Like hearts of angel's making?
Then haste, and guard the treasure now,
When fondly you've enshrined it,
For there's a heart for every one,
If every one could find it.

CHARLES SWAIN.



I WAITED TILL THE TWILIGHT.

I WAITED till the twilight,
And yet he did not come ;
I strayed along the brookside,
And slowly wandered home ;
When who should come behind me,
But him I would have chid ;
He said he came to find me —
Do you really think he did?

He said since last we parted,
He'd thought of naught so sweet,
As of this very moment, —
The moment we should meet.
He showed me where, half-shaded,
A cottage home lay hid ;
He said for me he'd made it —
Do you really think he did?

He said when first he saw me,
Life seemed at once divine,
Each night he dreamed of angels,
And every face was mine ;
Sometimes, a voice in sleeping,
Would all his hopes forbid ;
And then he'd waken weeping —
Do you really think he did?

CHARLES SWAIN.



REST.

LOVE, give me one of thy dear hands to hold,
Take thou my tired head upon thy breast ;
Then sing me that sweet song we loved of old,
The dear, soft song about our little nest.
We knew the song before the nest was ours ;
We sang the song when first the nest we found ;
We loved the song in happy after-hours,
When peace came to us, and content profound.
Then sing that olden song to me to-night,
While I, reclining on thy faithful breast,

See happy visions in the fair firelight,
And my whole soul is satisfied with rest.
Better than all our by-gone dreams of bliss,
Are deep content and rest secure as this.

What though we missed love's golden summer-time,
His autumn fruits were ripe when we had leave
To enter joy's wide vineyard in our prime,
Good guerdon for our waiting to receive.
Love gave us no frail pledge of summer flowers,
But side by side we reaped the harvest-field ;
Now side by side we pass the winter hours,
And day by day new blessings are revealed.
The heyday of our youth, its roseate glow,
Its high desires and cravings manifold,
The raptures and delights of long ago
Have passed ; but we have truer joys to hold.
Sing me the dear old song about the nest,
Our blessed home, our little ark of rest.

All The Year Round.



TWIN STARS ALOFT.

TWIN stars, aloft in ether clear,
Around each other roll away,
Within one common atmosphere
Of their own mutual light and day.
And myriad happy eyes are bent
Upon their changeless love away ;
As strengthened by their one intent,
They pour the flood of life and day.

So we, through this world's waning night,
Shall, hand in hand, pursue our way ;
Shed round us order, love, and light,
And shine unto the perfect day.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.



LOVE TOOK ME SOFTLY BY THE HAND.

LOVE took me softly by the hand,
Love led me all the country o'er,
And showed me beauty in the land,
That I had never seen before —
Never before — never before —
O Love, sweet Love!

There was a glory in the morn,
There was a calmness in the night,
A mildness in the south wind borne,
That I have never felt aright,
Never aright — never aright, —
O Love, sweet Love!

But now it cannot pass away —
I feel it wheresoe'er I go,
And in my heart by night and day
Its gladness moveth to and fro ;
By night and day — by night and day —
O Love, sweet Love!

ANONYMOUS.

SONG.

I.

NAY, but you who do not love her,
Is she not pure gold, my mistress?
Holds earth aught — speak truth — above her?
Aught like this tress, see, and this tress,
And this last fairest tress of all,
So fair, see, ere I let it fall?

II.

Because, you spend your lives in praising;
To praise, you search the wide world over;
Then why not witness, calmly gazing,
If earth holds aught — speak truth — above her?
Above this tress, and this, I touch
But cannot praise, I love so much.

ROBERT BROWNING.



SONG.

WHEN sparrows build, and the leaves break forth,
My old sorrow wakes and cries,
For I know there is dawn in the far, far north
And a scarlèt sun doth rise.
Like a scarlet fleece the snowfield spreads,
And the icy founts run free,
And the bergs begin to bow their heads,
And plunge, and sail in the sea.

O my lost love, and my own, own love,
And my love that loved me so!
Is there never a chink in the world above
Where they listen for words from below?
Nay, I spoke once, and I grieved thee sore,
I remember all that I said,
And now thou wilt hear me no more — no more,
Till the sea gives up her dead!

Thou didst set thy foot on the ship, and sail
To the Ice-fields and the snow;
Thou wert sad, for thy love did not avail,
And the end I could not know;
How could I tell I should love thee to-day,
Whom that day I held not dear?
How could I know I should love thee away
When I did not love thee anear?

We shall walk no more through the sodden plain
With the faded bents o'erspread;
We shall stand no more by the seething main
While the dark wrack drives o'erhead;
We shall part no more in the wind and the rain,
Where thy last farewell was said;
But perhaps I shall meet thee and know thee again
When the sea gives up her dead.

JEAN INGELOW.

DESTINY.

SOMEWHERE there waiteth in this world of ours
For one lone soul another lonely soul,
Each choosing each through all the weary hours,
And meeting strangely at one sudden goal.
Then blend they, like green leaves with golden
flowers,
Into one beautiful and perfect whole ;
And life's long night is ended, and the way
Lies open onward to eternal day.

EDWIN ARNOLD.



LIGHT.

THE night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one,
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one,
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.

FRANCIS W. BOURDILLON.

CUPID'S ARROW.

YOUNG Cupid went storming to Vulcan one day,
And besought him to look at his arrow,
" 'Tis useless!" he cried, " You must mend it, I say,
'Tisn't fit to let fly at a sparrow.
There's something that's wrong in the shaft, or the
dart,
For it flutters quite false to my aim,
'Tis an age since it fairly went home to a heart,
And the world really jests at my name.

" I have straightened, I've bent, I've tried all, I
declare,
I've perfumed it with sweetest of sighs ;
'Tis feathered with ringlets my mother might wear,
And the barb gleams with light from young eyes ;
But it falls without touching — I'll break it, I vow,
For there's Hymen beginning to pout,
He's complaining his torch beams so dull and so low,
That Zephyr might puff it right out."

Little Cupid went on with his pitiful tale,
Till Vulcan the weapon restored ;
" There, take it, young sir, try it now. If it fail,
I will ask neither fee nor reward! "
The urchin shot out, and rare havoc he made,
The wounded and dead were untold,
But no wonder the rogue had such slaughtering trade,
For the arrow was laden with gold.

ELIZA COOK.

TWO LOVERS.

Two lovers by a moss-grown spring ;
They leaned soft cheeks together there,
Mingled the dark and sunny hair,
And heard the wooing thrushes sing.

O budding time!

O love's blest prime!

Two wedded from the portal stept ;
The bells made happy carolings,
The air was soft as fanning wings,
White petals on the pathway slept.

O pure-eyed bride!

O tender pride!

Two faces o'er a cradle bent ;
Two hands above the head were locked ;
These pressed each other while they rocked ;
Those watched a life that love had sent.

O solemn hour!

O hidden power!

Two parents by the evening fire ;
The red light fell about their knees
On heads that rose by slow degrees
Like buds upon the lily-spire.

O patient life!

O tender strife!

The two still sat together there,
The red light shone about their knees ;
But all the heads by slow degrees
Had gone and left that lonely pair.
O voyage fast!
O vanished past!

The red light shone upon the floor,
And made the space between them wide ;
They drew their chairs up side by side,
Their pale cheeks joined, and said, "Once more!"
O memories!
O past that is!

GEORGE ELIOT.



THE LOW-BACKED CAR.

WHEN first I saw sweet Peggy,
'Twas on a market day :
A low-backed car she drove, and sat
Upon a truss of hay ;
But when that hay was blooming grass,
And decked with flowers of spring,
No flower was there that could compare
With the blooming girl I sing.
As she sat in the low-backed car,
The man at the turnpike bar
Never asked for the toll,
But just rubbed his owld poll,
And looked after the low-backed car.

In battle's wild commotion,
The proud and mighty Mars
With hostile scythes demands his tithes
Of death, in warlike cars ;
While Peggy, peaceful goddess,
Has darts in her bright eye,
That knock men down in the market town,
As right and left they fly ;
While she sits in her low-backed car,
Than battle more dangerous far ;—
For the doctor's art
Cannot cure the heart,
That is hit from that low-backed car.

Sweet Peggy, round her car, sir,
Has strings of ducks and geese,
But the scores of hearts she slaughters
By far outnumber these ;
While she among her poultry sits,
Just like a turtle-dove,
Well worth the cage, I do engage,
Of the blooming god of Love!
While she sits in her low-backed car,
The lovers come near and far ;
And envy the chicken
That Peggy is pickin',
As she sits in her low-backed car.

Oh! I'd rather own that car, sir,
With Peggy by my side,
Than a coach and four and gold galore,
And a lady for my bride ;

For a lady would sit forninst me,
On a cushion made with taste,
While Peggy would sit beside me,
With my arm around her waist,—
While we drove in the low-backed car,
To be married by Father Mahar;
Oh! my heart would beat high
At her glance and her sigh,—
Though it beat in a low-backed car.

SAMUEL LOVER



COME INTO THE GARDEN, MAUD.

COME into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone;
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the roses blown.

For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of Love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
To faint in his light, and to die.

All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon;
All night has the casement jessamine stirred
To the dancers dancing in tune:

Till a hush fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.

I said to the lily: "There is but one
With whom she has heart to be gay.
When will the dancers leave her alone?
She is weary of dance and play."
Now half to the setting moon are gone,
And half to the rising day;
Low on the sand and loud on the stone
The last wheel echoes away.

I said to the rose: "The brief night goes,
In babble and revel and wine.
O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
For one that will never be thine?
But mine, but mine," so I sware to the rose,
"Forever and ever, mine."

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
As the music clashed in the hall;
And long by the garden lake I stood,
For I heard your rivulet fall
From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,
Our wood that is dearer than all.

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
That whenever a March-wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes,

To the woody hollows in which we meet
And the valleys of Paradise.

The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree ;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake,
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea ;
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,
Knowing your promise to me ;
The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sighed for the dawn and thee.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one ;
Shine out little head, sunning over with curls,
To the flowers, and be their sun.

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear ;
She is coming, my life, my fate ;
The red rose cries, " She is near, she is near " ;
And the white rose weeps, " She is late " ;
The larkspur listens, " I hear, I hear " ;
And the lily whispers, " I wait."

She is coming, my own, my sweet ;
Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthy bed ;

My dust would hear her and beat,
 Had I lain for a century dead ;
 Would start and tremble under her feet,
 And blossom in purple and red.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

SONNETS.

"Era già l'ora che volge il desio." — DANTE.

"Ricorro al tempo ch'io vi vidi prima." — PETRARCA.

I WISH I could remember that first day,
 First hour, first moment of your meeting me,
 If bright or dim the season, it might be
 Summer or Winter for aught I can say ;
 So unrecorded did it slip away,
 So blind was I to see and to foresee,
 So dull to mark the budding of my tree
 That would not blossom yet for many a May.
 If only I could recollect it, such
 A day of days! I let it come and go
 As traceless as a thaw of bygone snow ;
 It seemed to mean so little, meant so much ;
 If only now I could recall that touch
 First touch of hand in hand — did one but know!

"E drizzeremo gli occhi al Primo Amore." — DANTE.

"Ma trovo peso non da le mie braccia." — PETRARCA.

If I could trust mine own self with your fate,
 Shall I not rather trust it in God's hand?
 Without Whose Will one lily doth not stand,

Nor sparrow fall at his appointed date ;
Who numbereth the innumerable sand,
Who weighs the wind and water with a weight,
To Whom the world is neither small nor great,
Whose knowledge foreknew every plan we planned,
Searching my heart for all that touches you,
I find there only love and love's goodwill
Helpless to help and impotent to do,
Of understanding dull, of sight most dim ;
And therefore I commend you back to Him
Whose love your love's capacity can fill.

"Amor, che ne la mente mi ragiona." — DANTE.

"Amor vien nel bel viso di costei." — PETRARCA.

If there be any one can take my place
And make you happy whom I grieve to grieve,
Think not that I can grudge it, but believe
I do commend you to that nobler grace,
That readier wit than mine, that sweeter face ;
Yea, since your riches make me rich, conceive
I too am crowned, while bridal crowns I weave,
And thread the bridal dance with jocund pace.
For if I did not love you, it might be
That I should grudge you some one dear delight ;
But since the heart is yours that was mine own
Your pleasure is my pleasure, right my right,
Your honorable freedom makes me free,
And you companioned I am not alone.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

BECAUSE.

It is not because your heart is mine — mine only —
 Mine alone ;
It is not because you chose me, weak and lonely,
 For your own ;
Not because the earth is fairer, and the skies
 Spread above you
Are more radiant for the shining of your eyes —
 That I love you!

It is not because the world's perplexèd meaning
 Grows more clear ;
And the Parapets of Heaven, with angels leaning,
 Seem more near ;
And Nature sings of praise with all her voices
 Since yours spoke,
Since within my silent heart, that now rejoices,
 Love awoke!

Nay, not even because your hand holds heart and
 life ;
 At your will
Soothing, hushing all its discord, making strife
 Calm and still ;
Teaching Trust to fold her wings, nor ever roam
 From her nest ;
Teaching Love that her securest, safest home
 Must be Rest.

But because this human Love, though true and
sweet —
Yours and mine —
Has been sent by Love more tender, more complete,
More divine ;
That it leads our hearts to rest at last in Heaven,
Far above you ;
Do I take you as a gift that God has given —
And I love you !

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER.

THE BANKS OF DOON.

YE banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair ;
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae weary fu' o' care !
Thou'lt break my heart, thou warbling bird,
That wantons through the flowering thorn.
Thou 'minds me o' departed joys,
Departed — never to return !

Aft ha'e I roved by bonnie Doon,
To see the rose and woodbine twine ;
And ilka bird sang o' its luvè,
And fondly sae did I o' mine.
Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree ;
And my fause luvè stole my rose,
But ah ! he left the thorn wi' me.

ROBERT BURNS.

I LOVE MY JEAN.

O' A' the airts the wind can blaw,
I dearly lo'e the west,
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
The lass that I lo'e best :
There wild woods grow, and rivers row,
Wi' mony a hill between ;
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
Sae lovely sweet and fair :
I hear her voice in ilka bird,
Wi' music charm the air :
There's not a bonnie flower that springs
By fountain, shaw, or green ;
There's not a bonnie bird that sings,
But minds me o' my Jean.

ROBERT BURNS.

A VALEDICTION.

GOD be with thee, my beloved — God be with thee!
Else alone thou goest forth,
Thy face unto the north,
Moor and pleasance all around thee and beneath
thee,
Looking equal in one snow ;
While I who try to reach thee,
Vainly follow, vainly follow.

With the farewell and the hollo,
And cannot reach thee so.
Alas, I can but teach thee!
God be with thee, my beloved — God be with thee.

Can I teach thee, my beloved — can I teach thee?
If I said, "Go left or right,"
The counsel would be light.
The wisdom, poor of all that could enrich thee,
My right would show like left;
My raising would depress thee,
My choice of light would blind thee,
Of way, would leave behind thee,
Of end, would leave bereft.
Alas, I can but bless thee!
May God teach thee, my beloved — may God teach
thee!

Can I bless thee, my beloved — can I bless thee?
What blessing word can I
From mine own tears keep dry?
What flowers grow in my field wherewith to dress
thee?
My good reverts to ill;
My calmnesses would move thee,
My softnesses would prick thee,
My bindings up would break thee,
My crownings, curse and kill.
Alas, I can but love thee!
May God bless thee, my beloved — may God bless
thee.

Can I love thee, my beloved — can I love thee?
And is this like love to stand
With no help in my hand,
When strong as death I fain would watch above
thee?
My love-kiss can deny
No tear that falls beneath it;
Mine oath of love can swear thee
From no ill that comes near thee —
And thou diest while I breathe it.
And I — I can but die!
May God love thee, my beloved — may God love
thee.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.



A CHAIN.

THE bond that links our souls together;
Will it last through stormy weather?
Will it moulder and decay
As the long hours pass away?
Will it stretch if Fate divide us,
When dark and weary hours have tried us?
O, if it look too poor and slight,
Let us break the links to-night!

It was not forged by mortal hands,
Or clasped with golden bars and bands;
Save thine and mine, no other eyes
The slender link can recognize:

In the bright light it seems to fade —
And it is hidden in the shade ;
While Heaven nor Earth have never heard,
Or solemn vow, or blighted word.

Yet what no mortal hand could make
No mortal power can ever break ;
What words or vows could never do,
No words or vows can make untrue ;
And if to other hearts unknown
The dearer and the more our own,
Because too sacred and divine
For other eyes, save thine and mine.

And see, though slender, it is made
Of Love and Trust, and can they fade ?
While, if too slight it seem, to bear
The breathings of the summer air,
We know that it could bear the weight
Of a most heavy heart of late,
And as each day an hour flew
The stronger for its burden grew.

And, too, we know and feel again
It has been sanctified by pain,
For what God deigns to try with sorrow
He means not to decay to-morrow ;
But through that fiery trial at last
When earthly ties and bonds are past ;
What slighter things dare not endure
Will make our Love more safe and pure.

Love shall be purified by Pain,
And Pain be soothed by Love again :
So let us now take heart and go
Cheerfully on, through joy and woe ;
No change the summer sun can bring,
Or the inconstant skies of spring,
Or the bleak winter's stormy weather,
For we shall meet them, Love, together!

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER.

LOVE WAKES AND WEEPS.

LOVE wakes and weeps
While Beauty sleeps ;
Oh! for music's softest numbers
To prompt a theme
For Beauty's dream,
Soft as the pillow of her slumbers!

Through groves of palm
Sigh gales of balm ;
Fire-flies on the air are wheeling ;
While through the gloom
Comes soft perfume,
The distant beds of flowers revealing.

Oh! wake and live!
No dreams can give
A shadowed bliss the real excelling ;
No longer sleep —
From lattice peep,
And list the tale that love is telling!

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

IN THREE DAYS.

So I shall see her in three days
And just one night, but nights are short ;
Then two long hours, and that is morn.
See how I come, unchanged, unworn!
Feel where my life broke off from thine
How fresh the splinters keep and fine, —
Only a touch and we combine!

Too long, this time of year, the days,
But nights, at least, the nights are short.
As night shows where her one moon is,
A hand's breadth of pure light and bliss,
So life's night gives my lady birth
And my eyes hold her! What is worth
The rest of heaven, the rest of earth?

O loaded curls, release your store
Of warmth and scent, as once before
The tingling hair did, lights and darks
Out breaking into fairy sparks,
When under curl and curl I pried
After the warmth and scent inside.
Through lights and darks how manifold —
The dark inspired, the light controlled!
As early Art embrowns the gold.

What great fear, should one say, "Three days
That change the world might change as well
Your fortune; and if joy delays,
Be happy that no worse befell!"

What small fear, if another says,
"Three days and one short night beside
May throw no shadow on your ways.
But years must turn with change untried,
With chance not easily defied,
With an end somewhere undescried."
No fear! — or if a fear be born
This minute, it dies out in scorn.
Fear? I shall see her in three days
And one night, now the nights are short,
Then just two hours and that is morn.

ROBERT BROWNING.

THE BONNIE WEE THING.

BONNIE wee thing, cannie wee thing,
Lovely wee thing, wast thou mine,
I wad wear thee in my bosom,
Lest my jewel I should tine.

Wistfully I look and languish
In that bonnie face of thine,
And my heart it stounds wi' anguish,
Lest my wee thing be na mine.

Wit, and grace, and love, and beauty
In ae constellation shine;
To adore thee is my duty,
Goddess o' this soul o' mine!

Bonnie wee thing, cannie wee thing,
Lovely wee thing, wast thou mine,
I wad wear thee in my bosom,
Lest my jewel I should tine.

ROBERT BURNS.



ANNIE LAURIE.

MAXWELTON braes are bonnie
Where early fa's the dew,
And it's there that Annie Laurie
Gie'd me her promise true, —
Gie'd me her promise true,
Which ne'er forgot will be,
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doune and dee.

Her brow is like the snaw drift ;
Her throat is like the swan ;
Her face it is the fairest
That e'er the sun shone on, —
That e'er the sun shone on,
And dark blue is her ee ;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doune and dee.

Like dew on the gowan lying
Is the fa' o' her fairy feet ;
And like the winds in summer sighing
Her voice is low and sweet, —
Her voice is low and sweet ;

And she's a' the world to me ;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doune and dee.

DOUGLAS OF FINLAND.



I'LL NEVER LOVE THEE MORE.

My dear and only love, I pray
That little world of thee,
Be governed by no other sway
Than purest monarchy :
For if confusion have a part,
Which virtuous souls abhor,
And hold a synod in thy heart,
I'll never love thee more.

As Alexander I will reign,
And I will reign alone ;
My thoughts did evermore disdain
A rival on my throne.
He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
Who dares not put it to the touch
To gain or lose it all.

But I will reign and govern still,
And always give the law,
And have each subject at my will,
And all to stand in awe ;

But 'gainst my batteries if I find
Thou storm, or vex me sore,
As if thou set me as a blind,
I'll never love thee more.

And in the empire of thy heart,
Where I should solely be,
If others do pretend a part,
Or dare to share with me,—
Or committees if thou erect,
Or go on such a score,
I'll smiling mock at thy neglect,
And never love thee more.

But if no faithless action stain
Thy love and constant word,
I'll make thee famous by my pen,
And glorious by my sword ;
I'll serve thee in such noble ways
As ne'er was known before,
I'll deck and crown thy head with bays,
And love thee more and more.

JAMES GRAHAM, *Marquis of Montrose.*



ROSALIND'S MADRIGAL.

LOVE in my bosom, like a bee,
Doth suck his sweet ;
Now with his wings he plays with me,
Now with his feet.

Within mine eyes he makes his nest,
His bed amidst my tender breast ;
My kisses are his daily feast,
And yet he robs me of my rest :
 Ah, wanton, will ye?

And if I sleep, then percheth he
 With pretty flight,
And makes his pillow of my knee,
 The livelong night.
Strike I my lute, he tunes the string ;
He music plays if so I sing ;
He lends me every lovely thing,
Yet cruel he my heart doth sting :
 Whist, wanton, still ye.

Else I with roses every day
 Will whip you hence,
And blind you when you long to play,
 For your offence ;
I'll shut mine eyes to keep you in ;
I'll make you fast it for your sin ;
I'll count your power not worth a pin ;
Alas! what hereby shall I win,
 If he gainsay me?

What if I beat the wanton boy
 With many a rod?
He will repay me with annoy,
 Because a god.
Then sit thou safely on my knee,

And let thy bower my bosom be ;
Lurk in mine eyes, I like of thee,
O Cupid! so thou pity me,
Spare not, but play thee.

THOMAS LODGE.



SONG.

PACK clouds away, and welcome day,
With night we banish sorrow ;
Sweet air, blow soft, mount lark, aloft,
To give my love good-morrow.
Wings from the wind to please her mind,
Notes from the lark, I'll borrow ;
Bird, prune thy wing! Nightingale, sing!
To give my love good-morrow.
To give my love good-morrow,
Notes from them all I'll borrow.

Wake from thy nest, robin-redbreast!
Sing, birds, in every furrow ;
And from each bill let music shrill
Give my fair love good-morrow !
Blackbird and thrush, in every bush,
Stare, linnet, and cock-sparrow,
You pretty elves, amongst yourselves,
Sing my fair love good-morrow.
To give my love good-morrow,
Sing, birds, in every furrow.

THOMAS HEYWOOD.

SONG.

Ask me no more where Jove bestows,
When June is past, the fading rose ;
For in your beauties, orient deep,
These flowers, as in their causes, sleep.

Ask me no more whither do stray
The golden atoms of the day ;
For in pure love heaven did prepare
Those powders to enrich your hair.

Ask me no more whither doth haste .
The nightingale, when May is past ;
For in your sweet dividing throat
She winters, and keeps warm her note.

* * * * *

Ask me no more if east or west
The Phœnix builds her spicy nest ;
For unto you at last she flies,
And in your fragrant bosom dies!

THOMAS CAREW.



THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS
LOVE.

COME live with me, and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove,
That hill and valley, grove and field,
And all the craggy mountains yield.

And we will sit upon the rocks,
Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses,
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle,
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle ;

A gown made of the finest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull ;
Fair-linèd slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold.

A belt of straw and ivy buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs ;
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my love.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing,
For thy delight each May-morning.
If these delights thy mind may move,
Come live with me and be my love.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE.



MOVE EASTWARD, HAPPY EARTH.

MOVE eastward, happy earth, and leave
Yon orange sunset waning slow ;
From fringes of the faded eve,
O, happy planet, eastward go ;

Till over thy dark shoulder glow
Thy silver sister-world, and rise
To glass herself in dewy eyes
That watch me from the glen below.
Ah, bear me with thee, lightly borne,
Dip forward under starry light,
And move me to my marriage-morn,
And round again to happy night.

ALFRED TENNYSON,

SERENADE.

Now the toils of day are over,
And the sun hath sunk to rest,
Seeking, like a fiery lover,
The bosom of the blushing west —
The faithful night keeps watch and ward,
Raising the moon her silver shield,
And summoning the stars to guard
The slumbers of my fair Mathilde!
The faithful night! Now all things lie
Hid by her mantle dark and dim,
In pious hope I hither hie,
And humbly chant mine evening hymn.
Thou art my prayer, my saint, my shrine!
(For never holy pilgrim kneel'd
Or wept at feet more pure than thine),
My virgin love, my sweet Mathilde!

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY.

MY STAR.

ALL that I know
Of a certain star
Is, it can throw
 (Like an angled spar)
Now a dart of red,
 Now a dart of blue,
Till my friends have said
 They would fain see, too,
My star that dartles the red and the blue!
Then it stops like a bird; like a flower, hangs furled;
 They must solace themselves with the Saturn
 above it.
What matter to me if their star is a world?
 Mine has opened its soul to me; therefore I
 love it.

ROBERT BROWNING.



WHEN THOU ART NEAR ME.

WHEN thou art near me,
Sorrow seems to fly,
And then I think, as well I may,
That on this earth there is no one
More blest than I.

But when thou leav'st me,
Doubts and fears arise,
And darkness reigns,
Where all before was light.

The sunshine of my soul
Is in those eyes,
And when they leave me
All the world is night.

But when thou art near me,
Sorrow seems to fly,
And then I feel, as well I may,
That on this earth there dwells not one
So blest as I.

LADY JOHN SCOTT.



ONE MORNING, OH! SO EARLY.

ONE morning, oh! so early, my belovèd, my be-
lovèd,
All the birds were singing blithely, as if never they
would cease;
'Twas a thrush sang in my garden, "Hear the story,
hear the story!"
And the lark sang, "Give us glory!"
And the dove said, "Give us peace!"

Then I listened, oh! so early, my belovèd, my be-
lovèd,
To that murmur from the woodland of the dove, my
dear, the dove;
When the nightingale came after, "Give us fame to
sweeten duty!"
When the wren sang, "Give us beauty!"
She made answer, "Give us love!"

Sweet is spring, and sweet the morning, my be-
lovèd, my belovèd ;
Now for us doth spring, doth morning, wait upon
the year's increase,
And my prayer goes up, "Oh, give us, crowned in
youth with marriage glory,
Give for all our life's dear story,
Give us love, and give us peace!"

JEAN INGELOW.



BEFORE THE DAYBREAK.

BEFORE the daybreak shines a star
That in the day's great glory fades ;
Too fiercely bright is the full light
That her pale-gleaming lamp upbraids.

Before the daybreak sings a bird
That stills her song ere morning light :
Too loud for her is the day's stir,
The woodland's thousand-tongued delight.

Ah! great the honor is, to shine
A light wherein no traveller errs ;
And rich the prize to rank divine
Among the world's loud choristers.

But I would be that paler star,
And I would be that lonelier bird,
To shine with hope, while hope's afar,
And sing of love, when love's unheard.

FRANCIS W. BOURDILLON.

A WARNING.

PLACE your hands in mine, dear,
 With their rose-leaf touch :
 If you heed my warning,
 It will spare you much.

Ah! with just such smiling
 Unbelieving eyes,
 Years ago I heard it : —
 You shall be more wise.

You have one great treasure,
 Joy for all your life ;
 Do not let it perish
 In one reckless strife.

Do not venture all, child,
 In one frail, weak heart ;
 So, through any shipwreck,
 You may save a part.

Where your soul is tempted
 Most to trust your fate,
 There, with double caution,
 Linger, fear, and wait.

Measure all you give, still
 Counting what you take ;
 Love for love, so placing
 Each an equal stake.

Treasure love ; though ready
Still to live without.
In your fondest trust, keep
Just one thread of doubt.

Build on no to-morrow ;
Love has but to-day :
If the links seem slackening,
Cut the bond away.

Trust no prayer nor promise ;
Words are grains of sand :
To keep your heart unbroken,
Hold it in your hand.

That your love may finish
Calm as it begun,
Learn this lesson better,
Dear, than I have done.

Years hence, perhaps, this warning
You shall give again,
In just the self-same words, dear,
And — just as much — in vain.

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER.

TO MARY.

I SEEM, in the midst of the crowd,
The lightest of all ;
My laughter rings cheery and loud
In banquet and ball.

My lip hath its smiles and its sneers,
For all men to see ;
But my soul, and my truth, and my tears,
Are for thee, are for thee !

Around me they flatter and fawn —
The young and the old,
The fairest are ready to pawn
Their hearts for my gold.
They sue me — I laugh as I spurn
The slaves at my knee ;
But in faith and in fondness I turn
Unto thee, unto thee !

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY.



THE INVITATION.

BEST and Brightest, come away,
Fairer far than this fair day,
Which, like thee, to those in sorrow
Comes to bid a sweet good-morrow
To the rough year just awake
In its cradle on the brake.
The brightest hour of unborn Spring,
Through the winter wandering,
Found, it seems, the halcyon morn
To hoar February born ;
Bending from Heaven, in azure mirth,
It kissed the forehead of the earth,
And smiled upon the silent sea,
And bade the frozen streams be free,

And waked to music all their fountains,
And breathed upon the frozen mountains,
And like a prophetess of May
Strewed flowers upon the barren way,
Making the wintry world appear
Like one on whom thou smilest, Dear.

Away, away, from men and towns,
To the wild wood and the downs, —
To the silent wilderness,
Where the soul need not repress
Its music, lest it should not find
An echo in another's mind,
While the touch of Nature's art
Harmonizes heart to heart.

Radiant Sister of the Day,
Awake! arise! and come away!
To the wild woods and the plains,
To the pools where winter rains
Image all their roof of leaves,
Where the pine its garland weaves
Of sapless green, and ivy dun, —
Round stems that never kiss the sun, —
Where the lawns and pastures be,
And the sandhills of the sea,
Where the melting hoar-frost wets
The daisy-star that never sets,
And wind-flowers and violets
Which yet join not scent to hue
Crown the pale year weak and new;

When the night is left behind
In the deep east, dim and blind,
And the blue noon is over us,
And the multitudinous
Billows murmur at our feet,
Where the earth and ocean meet,
And all things seem only one
In the universal Sun.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

It is the miller's daughter,
And she is grown so dear, so dear,
That I would be the jewel
That trembles at her ear:
For hid in ringlets day and night,
I touch her neck so warm and white.

And I would be the girdle
About her dainty dainty waist,
And her heart would beat against me,
In sorrow and in rest.
And I should know if it beat right,
I'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace,
And all day long to fall and rise
Upon her balmy bosom,
With her laughter or her sighs,
And I would lie so light, so light,
I scarce should be unclasp'd at night.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

A VOICE BY THE CEDAR TREE.

I.

A VOICE by the cedar tree,
In the meadow under the Hall!
She is singing an air that is known to me,
A passionate ballad gallant and gay,
A martial song like a trumpet's call!
Singing alone in the morning of life,
In the happy morning of life and of May,
Singing of men that in battle array,
Ready in heart and ready in hand,
March with banner and bugle and fife
To the death, for their native land.

II.

Maud with her exquisite face,
And wild voice pealing up to the sunny sky,
And feet like sunny gems on an English green,
Maud in the light of her youth and her grace,
Singing of Death, and of Honor that cannot die,
Till I well could weep for a time so sordid and
mean,
And myself so languid and base.

III.

Silence, beautiful voice!
Be still, for you only trouble the mind
With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,
A glory I shall not find.

Still! I will hear you no more,
For your sweetness hardly leaves me a choice
But to move to the meadow and fall before
Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,
Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind,
Not her, not her, but a voice.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

DIVIDED.

I.

AN empty sky, a world of heather,
Purple of foxglove, yellow of broom;
We two among them wading together,
Shaking out honey, treading perfume.

Crowds of bees are giddy with clover,
Crowds of grasshoppers skip at our feet,
Crowds of larks at their matins hang over
Thanking the Lord for a life so sweet.

Flusheth the rise with her purple favor,
Gloweth the cleft with her golden ring,
'Twixt the two brown butterflies waver,
Lightly settle, and sleepily swing.

We two walk till the purple dieth
And short dry grass under foot is brown,
But one little streak at a distance lieth
Green like a ribbon to prank the down.

II.

Over the grass we stepped unto it,
And God He knoweth how blithe we were!
Never a voice to bid us eschew it:
Hey the green ribbon that showed so fair!

Hey the green ribbon! we kneeled beside it,
We parted the grasses dewy and sheen;
Drop over drop there filtered and slid
A tiny bright beck that trickled between.

Tinkle, tinkle, sweetly it sung to us,
Light was our talk as of faëry bells —
Faëry wedding-bells faintly rung to us
Down in their fortunate parallels.

Hand in hand, while the sun peered over,
We lapped the grass on that youngling spring:
Swept back its rushes, smoothed its clover,
And said, "Let us follow it westering."

III.

A dapple sky, a world of meadows,
Circling above us the black rooks fly
Forward, backward; lo, their dark shadows
Flit on the blossoming tapestry —

Flit on the beck, for her long grass parteth
As hair from a maid's bright eyes blown back;
And, lo, the sun like a lover darteth
His flattering smile on her wayward track.

Sing on! we sing in the glorious weather
 Till one steps over the tiny strand,
 So narrow, in sooth, that still together
 On either brink we go hand in hand.

The beck grows wider, the hands must sever.
 On either margin, our songs all done,
 We move apart, while she singeth ever,
 Taking the course of the stooping sun.

He prays, "Come over" — I may not follow;
 I cry, "Return" — but he cannot come:
 We speak, we laugh, but with voices hollow;
 Our hands are hanging, our hearts are numb.

IV.

A breathing sigh, a sigh for answer,
 A little talking of outward things:
 The careless beck is a merry dancer,
 Keeping sweet time to the air she sings.

A little pain when the beck grows wider;
 "Cross to me now — for her wavelets swell":
 "I may not cross" — and the voice beside her
 Faintly reacheth, though heeded well.

No backward path; ah! no returning;
 No second crossing that ripple's flow:
 "Come to me now, for the west is burning;
 Come ere it darkens;" — "Ah, no! ah, no!"

Then cries of pain, and arms outreaching —
The beck grows wider and swift and deep :
Passionate words as of one beseeching —
The loud beck drowns them ; we walk, and weep.

V.

A yellow moon in splendor drooping,
A tired queen with her state oppressed,
Low by rushes and swordgrass stooping,
Lies she soft on the waves at rest.

The desert heavens have felt her sadness ;
Her earth will weep her some dewy tears ;
The wild beck ends her tune of gladness,
And goeth stilly as soul that fears.

We two walk on in our grassy places
On either marge of the moonlit flood,
With the moon's own sadness in our faces,
Where joy is withered, blossom and bud.

VI.

A shady freshness, chafers whirring,
A little piping of leaf-hid birds ;
A flutter of wings, a fitful stirring,
A cloud to the eastward snowy as curds.

Bare glassy slopes, where kids are tethered ;
Round valleys like nests all ferny-lined ;
Round hills, with fluttering tree-tops feathered,
Swell high in their freckled robes behind.

A rose-flush tender, a thrill, a quiver,
When golden gleams to the tree-tops glide ;
A flashing edge for the milk-white river,
The beck, a river — with still sleek tide.

Broad and white, and polished as silver,
On she goes under fruit-laden trees ;
Sunk in leafage cooeth the culver,
And 'plaineth of love's disloyalties.

Glitters the dew and shines the river,
Up comes the lily and dries her bell ;
But two are walking apart forever,
And wave their hands for a mute farewell.

VII.

A braver swell, a swifter sliding ;
The river hasteth, her banks recede :
Wing-like sails on her bosom gliding
Bear down the lily and drown the reed.

Stately prows are rising and bowing
(Shouts of mariners winnow the air),
And level sands for banks endowing
The tiny green ribbon that showed so fair.

While, O my heart! as white sails shiver
And crowds are passing, and banks stretch wide,
How hard to follow, with lips that quiver,
That moving speck on the far-off side!

Farther, farther — I see it — know it —
My eyes brim over, it melts away :
Only my heart to my heart shall show it
As I walk desolate day by day.

VIII.

And yet I know past all doubting, truly —
And knowledge greater than grief can dim —
I know, as he loved, he will love me duly —
Yea, better — e'en better than I love him.

And as I walk by the vast calm river,
The awful river so dread to see,
I say, "Thy breadth and thy depth forever
Are bridged by his thoughts that cross to me."

JEAN INGELow.

A BIRD-SONG.

It's a year almost that I have not seen her ;
Oh! last summer, green things were greener,
Brambles fewer, the blue sky bluer.

It's well-nigh summer, for there's a swallow ;
Come one swallow, his mate will follow,
The bird-race quicken and wheel and thicken.

O happy swallow, whose mate will follow
O'er height, o'er hollow! I'd be a swallow
To build, this weather, our nest together.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

WHEN I think on the happy days
 I spent wi' you, my dearie,
 And now what lands between us lie,
 How can I but be eerie!

How slow ye move, ye heavy hours,
 As ye were wae and weary!
 It was na sae ye glinted by
 When I was wi' my dearie.

ANONYMOUS.



TO ALTHEA, FROM PRISON.

WHEN Love, with unconfinèd wings,
 Hovers within my gates,
 And my divine Althea brings
 To whisper at the grates ;
 When I lie tangled in her hair,
 And fetter'd to her eye,
 The birds that wanton in the air
 Know no such liberty.

* * * * *

Stone walls do not a prison make,
 Nor iron bars a cage :
 Minds innocent and quiet take
 That for a hermitage :
 If I have freedom in my love,
 And in my soul am free,
 Angels alone, that soar above,
 Enjoy such liberty.

RICHARD LOVELACE.

SONGS FROM THE PRINCESS.

Ask me no more : the moon may draw the sea ;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the
shape,
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape :
But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee?
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more : what answer should I give?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye :
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live ;
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more : thy fate and mine are seal'd :
I strove against the stream and all in vain :
Let the great river take me to the main :
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield ;
Ask me no more.

As thro' the land at eve we went,
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
We fell out, my wife and I,
O we fell out I know not why,
And kiss'd again with tears.

And blessings on the falling out
That all the more endears,
When we fall out with those we love
And kiss again with tears!

For when we came where lies the child
We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
O there above the little grave,
We kiss'd again with tears.

“O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying South,
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

“O tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each,
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,
And dark and true and tender is the North.

“O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow, and light
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,
And cheep and twitter twenty million loves.

“O were I thou that she might take me in,
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died.

“Why lingereth she to clothe her heart with
love,
Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself, when all the woods are green?

“O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is flown :
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,
But in the North long since my nest is made.

“O tell her, brief is life but love is long,
And brief the sun of summer in the North,
And brief the moon of beauty in the South.

“O Swallow, flying from the golden woods,
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and make her
mine,
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.”

ALFRED TENNYSON.



SONG OF THE VIOLET.

A HUMBLE flower long time I pined
Upon the solitary plain,
And trembled at the angry wind,
And shrunk before the bitter rain.
And oh! 'twas in a blessed hour
A passing wanderer chanced to see,
And, pitying the lonely flower,
To stoop and gather me.

I fear no more the tempest rude,
On dreary heath no more I pine,
But left my cheerless solitude,
To deck the breast of Caroline.
Alas! our days are brief at best,
Nor long, I fear, will mine endure,
Though sheltered here upon a breast
So gentle and so pure.

It draws the fragrance from my leaves,
It robs me of my sweetest breath,
And every time it falls and heaves,
It warns me of my coming death.
But one I know would glad forego
All joys of life to be as I ;
An hour to rest on that sweet breast,
And then, contented, die.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY.



LOVE IN A LIFE.

ROOM after room,
I hunt the house through
We inhabit together.
Heart, fear nothing, for, heart, thou shalt find her,
Next time, herself ! — not the trouble behind her
Left in the curtain, the couch's perfume !
As she brushed it, the cornice-wreath blossomed
anew, —
Yon looking-glass gleamed at the wave of her
feather.

Yet the day wears,
And door succeeds door ;
I try the fresh fortune, —
Range the wide house from the wing to the centre.
Still the same chance ! she goes out as I enter.
Spend my whole day in the quest, — who cares ?
But 'tis twilight, you see, — with such suits to explore,
Such closets to search, such alcoves to importune !

ROBERT BROWNING.

LOVE.

LOVE is not made of kisses, or of sighs,
Of clinging hands, or of the sorceries
And subtle witchcrafts of alluring eyes.

Love is not made of broken whispers ; no !
Nor of the blushing cheek, whose answering glow
Tells that the ear has heard the accents low.

Love is not made of tears, nor yet of smiles,
Of quivering lips, or of enticing wiles :
Love is not tempted ; he himself beguiles.

This is Love's language, but this is not Love.

If we know aught of Love, how shall we dare
To say that this is Love, when well aware
That these are common things, and Love is rare ?

As separate streams may, blending, ever roll
In course united, so, of soul to soul,
Love is the union into one sweet whole.

As molten metals mingle ; as a chord
Swells sweet in harmony ; when Love is Lord,
Two hearts are one, as letters form a word.

One heart, one mind, one soul, and one desire,
A kindred fancy, and a sister fire
Of thought and passion ; these can Love inspire.

This makes a heaven of earth ; for this is Love.

Chambers' Journal.

LIFE IN A LOVE.

ESCAPE me?

Never —

Beloved!

While I am I, and you are you,

So long as the world contains us both,

Me the loving and you the loth,

While the one eludes, must the other pursue.

My life is a fault at last, I fear :

It seems too much like a fate, indeed!

Though I do my best I shall scarce succeed.

But what if I fail of my purpose here?

It is but to keep the nerves at strain,

To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,

And baffled, get up and begin again, —

So the chase takes up one's life, that's all.

While, look but once from your farthest bound

At me so deep in the dust and dark,

No sooner the old hope goes to ground

Than a new one, straight to the self-same mark,

I shape me —

Ever

Removed!

ROBERT BROWNING.



NOT OURS THE VOWS.

NOT ours the vows of such as plight

Their troth in sunny weather,

While leaves are green, and skies are bright,

To walk on flowers together.

But we have loved as those who tread
The thorny path of sorrow,
With clouds above, and cause to dread
Yet deeper gloom to-morrow.

That thorny path, those stormy skies,
Have drawn our spirits nearer,
And rendered us, by sorrow's ties,
Each to the other dearer.

Love, born in hours of joy and mirth,
With mirth and joy may perish ;
That to which darker hours gave birth
Still more and more we cherish.

It looks beyond the clouds of time,
And through death's shadowy portal,
Made by adversity sublime,
By faith and hope immortal.

BERNARD BARTON.



FOR THE FUTURE.

I WONDER did you ever count
The value of one human fate ;
Or sum the infinite amount
Of one heart's treasures, and the weight
Of Life's one venture, and the whole concentrate
purpose of a soul.

And if you ever paused to think
That all this in your hands I laid
Without a fear : — did you not shrink
From such a burden? half afraid,
Half-wishing that you could divide the risk, or cast
it all aside.

While Love has daily perils, such
As none foresee and none control ;
And hearts are strung so that one touch,
Careless or rough, may jar the whole,
You well might feel afraid to reign with absolute
power of joy and pain.

You well might fear — if Love's sole claim
Were to be happy ; but true Love
Takes joy as solace, not as aim,
And looks beyond and looks above ;
And sometimes through the bitterest strife first
learns to live her highest life.

Earth forges joy into a chain
Till fettered Love forgets its strength,
Its purpose, and its end ; — but Pain
Restores its heritage at length,
And bids Love rise again and be eternal, mighty,
pure, and free.

If then your future life should need
A strength my Love can only gain
Through suffering, or my heart be freed

Only by sorrow from some stain,
Then you shall give, and I will take, this Crown of
fire for Love's dear sake.

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER.

COMFORT.

IF there should come a time, as well there may,
When sudden tribulation smites thine heart,
And thou dost come to me for help, and stay,
And comfort — how shall I perform my part?
How shall I make my heart a resting-place,
A shelter safe for thee when terrors smite?
How shall I bring the sunshine to thy face,
And dry thy tears in bitter woe's despite?
How shall I win the strength to keep my voice
Steady and firm, although I hear thy sobs?
How shall I bid thy fainting soul rejoice,
Nor mar the counsel by mine own heart-throbs?
Love, my love teaches me a certain way,
So, if thy dark hour come, I am thy stay.
I must live higher, nearer to the reach
Of angels in their blessed trustfulness,
Learn their unselfishness, ere I can teach
Content to thee whom I would greatly bless.
Ah me! what woe were mine if thou shouldst come,
Troubled, but trusting, unto me for aid,
And I should meet thee powerless and dumb,
Willing to help thee, but confused, afraid!

It shall not happen thus, for I will rise,
 God helping me, to higher life, and gain
 Courage and strength to give thee counsel wise,
 And deeper love to bless thee in thy pain.
 Fear not, dear love, thy trial hour shall be
 The dearest bond between my heart and thee.

All the Year Round.



SEVEN TIMES THREE. LOVE.

I LEANED out of window, I smelt the white clover,
 Dark, dark was the garden, I saw not the gate;
 "Now, if there be footsteps, he comes, my one
 lover —
 Hush, nightingale, hush! O, sweet nightingale,
 wait
 Till I listen and hear
 If a step draweth near,
 For my love he is late!

"The skies in the darkness stoop nearer and nearer,
 A cluster of stars hangs like fruit in the tree,
 The fall of the water comes sweeter, comes clearer:
 To what art thou listening, and what dost thou
 see?
 Let the star-clusters grow,
 Let the sweet waters flow,
 And cross quickly to me.

"You night moths that hover where honey brims
over

From sycamore blossoms, or settle or sleep ;
You glowworms, shine out, and the pathway discover
To him that comes darkling along the rough steep.
Ah, my sailor, make haste,
For the time runs to waste,
And my love lieth deep —

"Too deep for swift telling ; and yet, my one lover,
I've conned thee an answer, it waits thee to-night."
By the sycamore passed he, and through the white
clover,
Then all the sweet speech I had fashioned took
flight ;
But I'll love him more, more
Than e'er wife loved before,
Be the days dark or bright.

JEAN INGELOW.



THE VIOLET.

THE violet in her green-wood bower,
Where birchen boughs with hazels mingle,
May boast itself the fairest flower
In glen, or copse, or forest dingle.

Though fair her gems of azure hue,
Beneath the dew-drop's weight reclining ;
I've seen an eye of lovelier blue,
More sweet through watery lustre shining.

The summer sun that dew shall dry,
Ere yet the day be passed its morrow ;
No longer in my false love's eye
Remained the tear of parting sorrow.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

SONG.

IN Love, if Love be Love, if Love be ours,
Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal powers :
Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.

It is the little rift within the lute
That by and by will make the music mute,
And ever widening slowly silence all.

The little rift within the lover's lute,
Or little pitted speck in garnered fruit,
That rotting inward slowly moulders all.

It is not worth the keeping : let it go :
But shall it? answer, darling ; answer, no.
And trust me not at all, or all in all.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

ONE WAY OF LOVE.

I.

ALL June I bound the rose in sheaves,
Now, rose by rose, I strip the leaves
And strew them where Pauline may pass.

She will not turn aside? Alas!
Let them lie. Suppose they die?
The chance was they might take her eye.

II.

How many a month I strove to suit
These stubborn fingers to the lute!
To-day I venture all I know.
She will not hear my music? So!
Break the string; fold music's wing:
Suppose Pauline had bade me sing!

III.

My whole life long I learned to love.
This hour my utmost art I prove
And speak my passion — heaven or hell?
She will not give me heaven? 'Tis well!
Lose who may — I still can say,
Those who win heaven, blest are they!

ROBERT BROWNING.



SWITZERLAND.

I. MEETING.

AGAIN I see my bliss at hand,
The town, the lake, are here;
My Marguerite smiles upon the strand,
Unaltered with the year.

I know that graceful figure fair,
That cheek of languid hue ;
I know that soft, enkerchiefed hair,
And those sweet eyes of blue.

Again I spring to make my choice ;
Again in tones of ire
I hear a God's tremendous voice, —
“ Be counselled, and retire.”

Ye guiding Powers who join and part,
What would ye have with me?
Ah, warn some more ambitious heart,
And let the peaceful be!

II. PARTING.

Ye storm-winds of autumn!
Who rush by, who shake
The window, and ruffle
The gleam-lighted lake ;
Who cross to the hill-side
Thin-sprinkled with farms,
Where the high woods strip sadly
Their yellowing arms, —
Ye are bound for the mountains!
Ah! with you let me go
Where your cold, distant barrier,
The vast range of snow,
Through the loose clouds lifts dimly

Its white peaks in air.
How deep is there stillness!
Ah! would I were there!

But on the stairs what voice is this I hear,
Buoyant as morning, and as morning clear?
Say, has some wet bird-haunted English lawn
Lent it the music of its trees at dawn?
Or was it from some sun-flecked mountain brook
That the sweet voice its upland clearness took?

Ah! it comes nearer —
Sweet notes, this way!

Hark! fast by the window
The rushing winds go,
To the ice-cumbered gorges,
The vast seas of snow!
There the torrents drive upward
Their rock-strangled hum;
There the avalanche thunders
The hoarse torrent dumb.
— I come, O ye mountains!
Ye torrents, I come!

But who is this, by the half-opened door,
Whose figure casts a shadow on the floor?
The sweet blue eyes — the soft, ash-colored hair —
The cheeks that still their gentle paleness wear —
The lovely lips, with their arched smile that tells
The unconquered joy in which her spirit dwells —

Ah! they bend nearer —
Sweet lips, this way!

Hark! the wind rushes past us!
Ah! with that let me go
To the clear, waning hill-side,
Unspotted by snow,
There to watch, o'er the sunk vale,
The frore mountain wall,
Where the niched snow-bed sprays down
Its powdery fall.
There its dusky blue clusters
The aconite spreads;
There the pines slope, the cloud-strips
Hung soft in their heads.
No life but, at moments,
The mountain bee's hum.
— I come, O ye mountains!
Ye pine-woods, I come!

Forgive me! forgive me!
Ah, Marguerite, fain
Would these arms reach to clasp thee!
But see! 'tis in vain.

In the void air, towards thee,
My stretched arms are cast;
But a sea rolls between us, —
Our different past!

To the lips, ah! of others
Those lips have been prest,
And others, ere I was,
Were strained to that breast.

Far, far from each other
Our spirits have grown.
And what heart knows another?
Ah! who knows his own?

Blow, ye winds! lift me with you!
I come to the wild.
Fold closely, O Nature!
Thine arms round thy child.

To thee only God granted
A heart ever new, —
To all always open,
To all always true.

Ah! calm me, restore me;
And dry up my tears
On thy high mountain platforms,
Where morn first appears;

Where the white mists, forever,
Are spread and upfurled, —
In the stir of the forces
Whence issued the world.

III. A FAREWELL.

My horse's feet beside the lake,
Where sweet the unbroken moonbeams lay,
Sent echoes through the night to wake
Each glistening strand, each heath-fringed bay.

The poplar avenue was passed,
And the roofed bridge that spans the stream;
Up the steep street I hurried fast,
Led by thy taper's starlike beam.

I came! I saw thee rise! the blood
Poured flushing to thy languid cheek.
Locked in each other's arms we stood,
In tears, with hearts too full to speak.

Days flew; ah, soon I could discern
A trouble in thine altered air!
Thy hand lay languidly in mine,
Thy cheek was grave, thy speech grew rare.

I blame thee not! This heart, I know,
To be long loved was never framed;
For something in its depths doth glow
Too strange, too restless, too untamed.

And women, — things that live and move
Mined by the fever of the soul, —
They seek to find in those they love
Stern strength, and promise of control.

They ask not kindness, gentle ways;
These they themselves have tried and known:
They ask a soul which never sways
With the blind gusts that shake their own.

I too have felt the load I bore
In a too strong emotion's sway ;
I too have wished, no woman more,
This starting, feverish heart away.

I too have longed for trenchant force,
And will like a dividing spear ;
Have praised the keen, unscrupulous course,
Which knows no doubt, which feels no fear.

But in the world I learnt, what there
Thou too will surely one day prove, —
That will, that energy, though rare,
Are yet far, far less rare than love.

Go, then! till time and fate impress
This truth on thee, be mine no more!
They will! for thou, I feel, not less
Than I, was destined to this lore.

We school our manners, act our parts ;
But He, who sees us through and through,
Knows that the bent of both our hearts
Was to be gentle, tranquil, true.

And though we wear out life, alas!
Distracted as a homeless wind,
In beating where we must not pass,
In seeking what we shall not find ;

Yet we shall one day gain, life past,
Clear prospect o'er our being's whole ;
Shall see ourselves, and learn at last
Our true affinities of soul.

We shall not then deny a course
To every thought the mass ignore ;
We shall not then call hardness force,
Nor lightness wisdom any more.

Then, in the eternal Father's smile,
Our soothed, encouraged souls will dare
To seem as free from pride and guile,
As good, as generous, as they are.

Then we shall know our friends! Though much
Will have been lost, — the help in strife,
The thousand sweet, still joys of such
As hand in hand face earthly life, —

Though these be lost, there will be yet
A sympathy august and pure ;
Ennobled by a vast regret,
And by contrition sealed thrice sure.

And we, whose ways were unlike here,
May then more neighboring courses ply ;
May to each other be brought near,
And greet across infinity.

How sweet, unreach'd by earthly jars,
My sister! to maintain with thee
The hush among the shining stars,
The calm upon the moonlit sea!

How sweet to feel, on the boon air,
All our unquiet pulses cease!
To feel that nothing can impair -
The gentleness, the thirst for peace, —

The gentleness too rudely hurled
On this wild earth of hate and fear;
The thirst for peace, a raving world
Would never let us satiate here.

IV. ISOLATION. TO MARGUERITE.

We were apart: yet, day by day,
I bade my heart more constant be.
I bade it keep the world away,
And grow a home for only thee;
Nor feared but thy love likewise grew,
Like mine, each day, more tried, more true.

The fault was grave! I might have known,
What far too soon, alas! I learned, —
The heart can bind itself alone,
And faith may oft be unreturned.
Self-swayed our feelings ebb and swell.
Thou lov'st no more. Farewell! Farewell!

Farewell! — And thou, thou lonely heart,
Which never yet without remorse
Even for a moment didst depart
From thy remote and spherèd course
To haunt the place where passions reign, —
Back to thy solitude again!

Back! with the conscious thrill of shame
Which Luna felt, that summer-night,
Flash through her pure immortal frame,
When she forsook the starry height
To hang o'er Endymion's sleep
Upon the pine-grown Latmian steep.

Yet she, chaste queen, had never proved
How vain a thing is mortal love,
Wandering in heaven, far removed ;
But thou hast long had place to prove
This truth, — to prove, and make thine own :
“ Thou hast been, shalt be, art, alone.”

Or, if not quite alone, yet they
Which touch thee are unmating things, —
Ocean and clouds and night and day ;
Lorn autumns and triumphant springs ;
And life, and others' joy and pain,
And love, if love, of happier men.

Of happier men ; for they, at least,
Have *dreamed* two human hearts might blend
In one, and were through faith released

From isolation without end
Prolonged ; nor knew, although not less
Alone than thou, their loneliness.

V. TO MARGUERITE. CONTINUED.

Yes! in the sea of life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live *alone*.
The islands feel the enclapping flow,
And then their endless bounds they know.

But when the moon their hollows lights,
And they are swept by balms of spring,
And in their glens, on starry nights,
The nightingales divinely sing ;
And lovely notes, from shore to shore,
Across the sounds and channels pour,—
Oh! then a longing like despair
Is to their farthest caverns sent ;
For surely once, they feel, we were
Parts of a single continent!
Now round us spreads the watery plain :
Oh, might our marges meet again!

Who ordered that their longing's fire
Should be, as soon as kindled, cooled?
Who renders vain their deep desire? —
A God, a God their severance ruled!
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea.

VI. ABSENCE.

In this fair stranger's eyes of gray,
Thine eyes, my love! I see.
I shiver; for the passing day
Had borne me far from thee.

This is the curse of life! that not
A nobler, calmer train
Of wiser thoughts and feelings blot
Our passions from our brain;

But each day brings its petty dust,
Our soon-choked souls to fill;
And we forget because we must,
And not because we will.

I struggle towards the light; and ye,
Once-longed-for storms of love!
If with the light ye cannot be,
I bear that ye remove.

I struggle towards the light; but oh,
While yet the night is chill,
Upon time's barren, stormy flow,
Stay with me, Marguerite, still!

VII. THE TERRACE AT BERNE.

(Composed ten years after the preceding.)

Ten years! and to my waking eye
Once more the roofs of Berne appear;
The rocky banks, the terrace high,
The stream! and do I linger here?

The clouds are on the Oberland,
The Jungfrau snows look faint and far;
But bright are those green fields at hand,
And through those fields comes down the Aar,

And from the blue twin-lakes it comes,
Flows by the town, the churchyard fair;
And 'neath the garden-walk it hums,
The house! and is my Marguerite there?

Ah! shall I see thee, while a flush
Of startled pleasure floods thy brow,
Quick through the oleanders brush,
And clap thy hands, and cry, '*Tis thou!*

Or hast thou long since wandered back,
Daughter of France! to France, thy home;
And flitted down the flowery track
Where feet like thine too lightly come?

Doth riotous laughter now replace
Thy smile, and rouge, with stony glare,
Thy cheek's soft hue, and fluttering lace
The kerchief that inwound thy hair?

Or is it over? art thou dead? —
Dead! — and no warning shiver ran
Across my heart, to say thy thread
Of life was cut, and closed thy span!

Could from earth's ways that figure slight
Be lost, and I not feel 'twas so?
Of that fresh voice the gay delight
Fail from earth's air, and I not know?

Or shall I find thee still, but changed,
But not the Marguerite of thy prime?
With all thy being re-arranged, —
Passed through the crucible of time;

With spirit vanished, beauty waned,
And hardly yet a glance, a tone,
A gesture — anything — retained
Of all that was my Marguerite's own?

I will not know! For wherefore try,
To things by mortal course that live,
A shadowy durability,
For which they were not meant, to give?

Like driftwood spars, which meet and pass
Upon the boundless ocean-plain,
So on the sea of life, alas!
Man meets man, — meets, and quits again.

I knew it when my life was young;
I feel it still now youth is o'er.
— The mists are on the mountain hung,
And Marguerite I shall see no more.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

EVELYN HOPE.

I.

BEAUTIFUL Evelyn Hope is dead!
Sit and watch by her side an hour.
That is her book-shelf, this her bed;
She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,
Beginning to die too, in the glass;
Little has yet been changed, I think:
The shutters are shut, no light may pass
Save two long rays through the hinge's chink.

II.

Sixteen years old when she died!
Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name;
It was not her time to love; beside,
Her life had many a hope and aim,
Duties enough and little cares,
And now was quiet, now astir,
Till God's hand beckoned unawares, —
And the sweet white brow is all of her.

III.

Is it too late then, Evelyn Hope?
What, your soul was pure and true,
The good stars met in your horoscope,
Made you of spirit, fire, and dew —
And just because I was thrice as old,
And our paths in the world diverged so wide,
Each was naught to each, must I be told?
We were fellow mortals, naught beside?

IV.

No, indeed! for God above
Is great to grant, as mighty to make,
And creates the love to reward the love :
I claim you still, for my own love's sake!
Delayed it may be for more lives yet,
Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few :
Much is to learn, much to forget
Ere the time be come for taking you.

V.

But the time will come, — at last it will,
When, Evelyn Hope, what meant (I shall say)
In the lower earth, in the years long still,
That body and soul so pure and gay?
Why your hair was amber, I shall divine,
And your mouth of your own geranium's red —
And what you would do with me, in fine,
In the new life come in the old one's stead.

VI.

I have lived (I shall say) so much since then,
Given up myself so many times,
Gained me the gains of various men,
Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes ;
Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full scope,
Either I missed or itself missed me :
And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope!
What is the issue? let us see!

VII.

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while!
My heart seemed full as it could hold ;
There was place and to spare for the frank young
smile,
And the red young mouth, and the hair's young
gold.
So hush, — I will give you this leaf to keep :
See, I shut it inside the sweet cold hand!
There, that is our secret : go to sleep!
You will wake, and remember, and understand.

ROBERT BROWNING.



SONG.

OH, say not, my love, with that mortified air,
That your spring-time of pleasure is flown,
Nor bid me to maids that are younger repair,
For those raptures that still are thine own.

Though April his temples may wreathe with the
vine,
Its tendrils in infancy curled,
'Tis the ardor of August matures us the wine,
Whose life-blood enlivenes the world.

Though thy form, that was fashioned as light as a
fay's,
Has assumed a proportion more round,

And thy glance, that was bright as a falcon's at
gaze,

Looks soberly now on the ground,—

Enough, after absence to meet me again,

Thy steps still with ecstasy move ;

Enough, that those dear sober glances retain

For me the kind language of love.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.



WISTERIA.

How tenderly the twilight falls

About our dear home's flowery walls,

Upon the garden bowers,

The breeze sighs over beds of bloom,

My darling, leave the dusky room,

Come out among the flowers.

Come forth, my wife, and stand with me,

Beneath our favorite chestnut-tree —

The glory of our lawn —

Look up, dear heart, in skies afar,

How softly beams the evening star —

The garish sun is gone.

How clearly from the coppice floats

The brown bird's strain — its magic notes

Of joy and sorrow blent.

How sweetly from the southern wall

Delightful odors round us fall,

The rich wisteria's scent.

See, darling; in this tender gloom
The clusters of its purple bloom
 Peep out amid the green :
A comely Summer robe it weaves
Of sturdy twigs and tender leaves,
 With splendid blooms between.

How rich and full a life must beat
In its green branches! fair and sweet
 It flowered in the Spring ;
And yet, ere Summer days are done,
It spreadeth to the Summer sun
 A second blossoming.

It seemeth unto us a type
Of love, Spring-born, but Summer-ripe,
 Full-hearted love like ours,
That sweetly smiled on life's young Spring,
Yet hath its fuller blossoming
 In these maturer hours.

Our lives were like the Spring-time boughs
Of this old tree, which wreaths our house
 With purple twice a year,
No leafage green of worldly praise,
Or worldly wealth made glad our days,
 But lowly love was dear!

Ah, darling! on this Summer night
Our hearts brimful with deep delight,
 We bless God as we stand

Beneath his arch of twilight sky
At rest, too glad to smile or sigh,
The happiest in the land.

Our tree of life is strong and full
Of leafage verdant, beautiful,
With blossoms in their prime,
For love, like fair wisteria flowers,
Brings, with full hands, to us and ours
A second blossom-time.

All the Year Round.



SONNET.

YES! hope may with my strong desire keep pace,
And I be undeluded, unbetrayed ;
For if of our affections none find grace
In sight of Heaven, then, wherefore hath God made
The world which we inhabit? Better plea
Love cannot have than that in loving thee
Glory to that eternal peace is paid,
Who such divinity to thee imparts
As hallows and makes pure all gentle hearts.
His hope is treacherous only whose love dies
With beauty, which is varying every hour ;
But, in chaste hearts, uninfluenced by the power
Of outward change, there blooms a deathless flower,
That breathes on earth the air of Paradise.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Translated by William Wordsworth.

MARRIED LOVERS.

COME away, the clouds are high,
Put the flashing needles by.
Many days are not to spare,
Or to waste, my fairest fair!
All is ready. Come to-day,
For the nightingale her lay,
When she findeth that the whole
Of her love, and all her soul,
Cannot forth of her sweet throat,
Sobs the while she draws her breath,
And the bravery of her note
In a few days altereth.
Come, ere she despond, and see
In a silent ecstasy
Chestnuts heave for hours and hours
All the glory of their flowers
To the melting blue above,
That broods over them like love.
Leave the garden walls, where blow
Apple-blossoms pink, and low
Ordered beds of tulips fine.
Seek the blossoms made divine
With a scent that is their soul.
These are soulless. Bring the white
Of thy gown to bathe in light
Walls for narrow hearts. The whole
Earth is found, and air and sea,
Not too wide for thee and me.

Not too wide, and yet thy face
Gives the meaning of all space,
And thine eyes, with starbeams fraught;
Hold the measure of all thought;
For of them my soul besought,
And was shown a glimpse of thine —
A veiled vestal, with divine
Solace, in sweet love's despair,
For that life is brief as fair.
Who hath most, he yearneth most,
Sure, as seldom heretofore,
Somewhere of the gracious more.
Deepest joy the least shall boast,
Asking with new-opened eyes
The remainder; that which lies
O, so fair! but not all conned —
O, so near! and yet beyond.

Come, and in the woodland sit,
Seem a wonted part of it.
Then, while moves the delicate air,
And the glories of thy hair
Little flickering sun-rays strike,
Let me see what thou art like;
For great love enthralls me so,
That, in sooth, I scarcely know.
Show me, in a house all green,
Save for long gold wedges' sheen,
Where the flies, white sparks of fire,
Dart and hover and aspire,
And the leaves, air-stirred on high,

Feel such joy they needs must sigh,
And the untracked grass makes sweet
All fair flowers to touch thy feet,
And the bees about them hum.
All the world is waiting. Come!

JEAN INGELOW.

HOW MANY TIMES.

How many times do I love thee, dear?
Tell me how many thoughts there be
In the atmosphere
Of a new-fall'n year,
Whose white and sable hours appear
The latest flake of Eternity;
So many times do I love thee, dear.

How many times do I love, again?
Tell me how many beads there are
In a silver chain
Of the evening rain,
Unravelled from the tumbling main,
And threading the eye of a yellow star:
So many times do I love again.

THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES.

JAMES LEE'S WIFE.

I.

AH, Love, but a day,
And the world has changed!

The sun's away,
And the bird estranged;
The wind has dropped,
And the sky's deranged:
Summer has stopped.

II.

Look in my eyes!
Wilt thou change too?
Should I fear surprise?
Shall I find aught new
In the old and dear,
In the good and true,
With the changing year?

III.

Thou art a man,
But I am thy love.
For the lake, its swan;
For the dell, its dove;
And for thee — (oh, haste!)
Me to bend above,
Me, to hold embraced.

AMONG THE ROCKS.

I.

Oh, good gigantic smile o' the brown old earth,
This autumn morning! How he sets his bones
To bask i' the sun, and thrusts out knees and feet

For the ripple to run over in its mirth ;
Listening the while, where on the heap of stones
The white breast of the sea-lark twitters sweet.

II.

That is the doctrine, simple, ancient, true ;
Such is life's trial, as old earth smiles and knows.
If you loved only what were worth your love,
Love were clear gain, and wholly well for you :
Make the low nature better by your throes !
Give earth yourself, go up for gain above !

ALONG THE BEACH.

I.

I will be quiet and talk with you,
And reason why you are wrong.
You wanted my love — is that much true?
And so I did love, so I do :
What has come of it all along?

II.

I took you — how could I otherwise?
For a world to me, and more ;
For all, love greatens and glorifies
Till God's a-glow, to the loving eyes,
In what was mere earth before.

III.

Yes, earth — yes, mere ignoble earth!
Now do I misstate, mistake?
'Do I wrong your weakness and call it worth?
Expect all harvest, dread no dearth,
Seal my sense up for your sake?

IV.

O Love, Love, no, Love! not so, indeed
You were just weak earth, I knew:
With much in you waste, with many a weed,
And plenty of passions run to seed,
But a little good grain too.

V.

And such as you were, I took you for mine:
Did not you find me yours,
To watch the olive and wait the vine,
And wonder when rivers of oil and wine
Would flow, as the Book assures?

VI.

Well, and if none of these good things came,
What did the failure prove?
The man was my whole world, all the same,
With his flowers to praise or his weeds to blame,
And, either or both, to love.

VII.

Yet this turns now to a fault — there! there!
That I do love, watch too long,
And wait too well, and weary and wear;
And 'tis all an old story, and my despair
Fit subject for some new song:

VIII.

“How the light, light love, he has wings to fly
At suspicion of a bond:
My wisdom has bidden your pleasure good-by,
Which will turn up next in a laughing eye,
And why should you look beyond?”

ROBERT BROWNING.



THE POET'S BRIDAL-DAY SONG.

O, MY love's like the steadfast sun,
Or streams that deepen as they run;
Nor hoary hairs, nor forty years,
Nor moments between sighs and tears,
Nor nights of thought, nor days of pain,
Nor dreams of glory dreamed in vain,
Nor mirth, nor sweetest song that flows
To sober joys and soften woes,
Can make my heart or fancy flee
One moment, my sweet wife, from thee.

Even while I muse, I see thee sit
In maiden bloom and matron wit;

Fair, gentle, as when first I sued,
Ye seem, but of sedater mood ;
Yet my heart leaps as fond for thee,
As when, beneath Arbigland tree,
We stayed and wooed, and thought the moon
Set on the sea an hour too soon ;
Or lingered 'mid the falling dew,
When looks were fond and words were few.

Though I see smiling at thy feet,
Five sons and a fair daughter sweet,
And time and care and birthtime woes
Have dimmed thine eye and touched thy rose,
To thee, and thoughts of thee, belong
Whate'er charms me in tale or song,
When words descend like dews, unsought,
With gleams of deep, enthusiast thought,
And Fancy in her heaven flies free,
They come, my love, they come from thee.

O, when more thought we gave, of old,
To silver, than some give to gold,
'Twas sweet to sit and ponder o'er
How we should deck our humble bower ;
'Twas sweet to pull, in hope, with thee,
The golden fruit of Fortune's tree ;
And sweeter still to choose and twine
A garland for that brow of time,
A song-wreath which may grace my Jean,
While rivers flow, and woods grow green.

At times there come, as come there ought,
Grave moments of sedater thought,
When Fortune frowns, nor lends our night
One gleam of her inconstant light ;
And Hope, that decks the peasants' bower,
Shines like a rainbow through the shower,
O then I see, while seated nigh,
A mother's heart shine in thine eye,
And proud resolve and purpose meek
Speak of thee more than words can speak.
I think this wedded wife of mine,
The best of all that's not divine.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

MY LADY SINGING.

SHE whom this heart must ever hold most dear
(This heart in happy bondage held so long)
Began to sing. At first a gentle fear
Rosied her countenance — for she's young,
And he who loves her most of all was near ;
But when at last her voice grew full and strong
O, from their ambush sweet, how rich and clear
Bubbled the notes abroad — a rapturous throng!
Her little hands were sometimes flung apart,
And sometimes palm to palm together prest,
Whilst wave-like blushes, rising from her breast
Kept time with that aërial melody,
As muses to the sight! — I standing nigh,
Received the falling fountain in my heart.

AUBREY DE VERE.

MADRIGAL.

As I saw fair Chloris walk alone,
The feathered rain came softly down,
As Jove descending from his tower
To court her in a silver shower,
The wanton snow flew to her breast
As little birds into their nest ;
But, overcome with whiteness there,
For grief dissolved into a tear ;
Thence falling on her garment's hem,
To deck her, froze into a gem.

ANONYMOUS.



YORK AND LANCASTER.

IF this fair rose offend thy sight,
Placed in thy bosom bare,
'Twill blush to find itself less white,
And turn Lancastrian there.

But if thy ruby lip it spy,
As kiss it thou mayst deign,
With envy pale 'twill lose its dye,
And Yorkish turn again.

ANONYMOUS.

JEANIE MORRISON.

I'VE wandered east, I've wandered west,
Through mony a weary way ;
But never, never can forget
The luvie o' life's young day!
The fire that's blawn on Beltane e'en
May weel be black gin yule ;
But blacker fa' awaits the heart
Where first fond luvie grows cule.

O dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
The thochts o' bygone years
Still fling their shadows ower my path,
And blind my een wi' tears :
They blind my een wi' saut, saut tears,
And sair and sick I pine,
As memory idly summons up
The blithe blinks o' lang syne.

'Twas then we luvit ilk ither weel,
'Twas then we twa did part ;
Sweet time, — sad time! twa bairns at scule,
Twa bairns, and but ae heart!
'Twas then we sat on ae laigh bink,
To leir ilk ither lear ;
And tones and looks and smiles were shed,
Remembered evermair.

I wonder Jeanie, aften yet,
When sitting on that bink,

Cheek touchin' cheek, loof locked in loof,
What our wee heads could think.
When baith bent down ower ae braid page,
Wi' ae buik on our knee,
Thy lips were on thy lesson, but
My lesson was in thee.

O, mind ye how we hung our heads,
How cheeks brent red wi' shame,
Whene'er the scule-weans laughin' said,
We cleeked thegither hame?
And mind ye o' the Saturdays
(The scule then skail't at noon,)
When we ran off to speel the braes, —
The broomy braes o' June?

My head rins round and round about,
My heart flows like a sea,
As one by one the thochts rush back
O' Scule-time and o' thee.
O mornin' life! O mornin' luvè!
O lichtsome days and lang,
When hinnied hopes around our hearts
Like simmer blossoms sprang!

O, mind ye, luvè, how aft we left
The deavin' dinsome town,
To wander by the green burnside,
And hear its waters croon?
The simmer leaves hung ower our heads,
The flowers burst round our feet,

And in the gloamin' o' the wood
The throssil whusslit sweet ;

The throssil whusslit in the wood,
The burn sang to the trees,
And we with Nature's heart in tune,
Concerted harmonies ;
And on the knowe abune the burn,
For hours thegither sat
Yon the silentness o' joy, till baith
Wi' very gladness grat.

Ay, ay, dear Jeanie Morrison,
Tears twinkled down your cheek
Like dew-beads on a rose, yet nane
Had ony power to speak!
That was a time, a blessed time,
When hearts were fresh and young,
When freely gushed all feelings forth,
Unsyllabled, — unsung!

I marvel, Jeanie Morrison,
Gin I hae been to thee
As closely twined wi' earliest thochts,
As ye hae been to me?
O, tell me gin their music fills
Thine ear as it does mine!
O, say gin e'er your heart grows grit
Wi' dreamings o' lang syne?

I've wandered east, I've wandered west,
I've born a weary lot ;
But in my wanderings, far or near,
Ye never were forgot.
The fount that first burst frae this heart
Still travels on its way ;
And channels deeper, as it rins,
The luvè o' life's young day.

O dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
Since we were sindered young,
I've never seen your face, nor heard
The music o' your tongue ;
But I could hug all wretchedness,
And happy could I die,
Did I but ken your heart still dreamed
O' bygone days and me!

WILLIAM MOTHERWELL.



I MET WI' HER I LUVED YESTREEN.

I MET wi' her I luvèd yestreen,
I met her wi' a look o' sorrow ;
My leave I took o' her for aye,
A weddit bride she'll be the morrow!

She durst na gie ae smile to me,
Nor drap ae word o' kindly feelin',
Yet down her cheeks the bitter tears,
In monie a pearly bead, were stealin'.

I could na my lost luvè upbraid,
 Altho' my dearest hopes were blighted,
 I could na say — "ye're fause to me!" —
 Tho' to anither she was plighted.

Like suthfast friens whom death divides,
 In Heaven to meet, we silent parted;
 Nae voice had we our griefs to speak,
 We felt sae lone and broken-hearted.

I'll hie me frae my native lan',
 Far frae thy blythesome banks o' Yarrow!
 Wae's me, I canna bide to see
 My winsume luvè anither's marrow!

I'll hie me to a distant lan',
 Wi' downcast ee and life-sick bosom,
 A weary waste the warld's to me,
 Sin' I hae lost that bonnie blossom.

WILLIAM MOTHERWELL.



A WOMAN'S QUESTION.

BEFORE I trust my Fate to thee,
 Or place my hand in thine,
 Before I let thy Future give
 Color and form to mine,
 Before I peril all for thee, question thy soul to-night
 for me.

I break all slighter bonds, nor feel
A shadow of regret :
Is there one link within the Past
That holds thy spirit yet?
Or is thy Faith as clear and free as that which I can
pledge to thee?

Does there within thy dimmest dreams
A possible future shine,
Wherein thy life could henceforth breathe,
Untouched, unshared by mine?
If so, at any pain or cost, O, tell me before all is lost.
Look deeper still. If thou canst feel
Within thy inmost soul,
That thou hast kept a portion back,
While I have staked the whole ;
Let no false pity spare the blow, but in true mercy
tell me so.

Is there within thy heart a need
That mine cannot fulfil?
One chord that any other hand
Could better wake or still?
Speak now — lest at some future day my whole life
wither and decay.

Lives there within thy nature hid
The demon-spirit Change,
Shedding a passing glory still
On all things new and strange? —
It may not be thy fault alone — but shield my heart
against thy own.

Couldst thou withdraw thy hand one day
And answer to my claim,
That Fate, and that to-day's mistake —
Not thou — had been to blame?
Some soothe their conscience thus; but thou wilt
surely warn and save me now.

Nay, answer *not*, — I dare not hear,
The words would come too late;
Yet I would spare thee all remorse,
So, comfort thee, my Fate —
Whatever on my heart may fall — remember, I *would*
risk it all!

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER.



A WOMAN'S ANSWER.

I WILL not let you say a Woman's part
Must be to give exclusive love alone;
Dearest, although I love you so, my heart
Answers a thousand claims beside your own.

I love — what do I not love? earth and air
Find space within my heart, and myriad things
You would not deign to heed are cherished there,
And vibrate on its very inmost strings.

I love the Summer with her ebb and flow
Of light, and warmth, and music, that have nurst
Her tender buds to blossoms . . . and you know
It was in summer that I saw you first.

I love the Winter dearly, too, . . . but then
I owe it so much ; on a winter's day,
Bleak, cold, and stormy, you returned again,
When you had been those weary months away.

I love the Stars like friends ; so many nights
I gazed at them, when you were far from me,
Till I grew blind with tears . . . those far-off lights
Could watch you, whom I longed in vain to see.

I love the Flowers ; happy hours lie
Shut up within their petals close and fast :
You have forgotten, dear ; but they and I
Keep every fragment of the golden Past.

I love, too, to be loved ; all loving praise
Seems like a crown upon my Life, — to make
It better worth the giving, and to raise
Still nearer to your own the heart you take.

I love all good and noble souls ; — I heard
One speak of you but lately, and for days,
Only to think of it, my soul was stirred
In the tender memory of such generous praise.

I love all those who love you ; all who owe
Comfort to you : and I can find regret
Even for those poorer hearts who once could know
And once could love you, and can now forget.

Well, is my heart so narrow, — I, who spare
Love for all these ? Do I not even hold
My favorite books in special tender care,
And prize them as a miser does his gold?

The Poets that you used to read to me
While summer twilights faded in the sky ;
But most of all I think Aurora Leigh,
Because — because — do you remember why?

Will you be jealous? Did you guess before
I loved so many things? Still you the best : —
Dearest, remember that I love you more,
O, more a thousand times, than all the rest!

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER.



TRUE OR FALSE.

So you think you love me, do you?
Well, it may be so ;
But there are many ways of loving
I have learnt to know.
Many ways, and but one true way,
Which is very rare ;
And the counterfeits look brightest,
Though they will not wear.

Yet they ring, almost, quite truly,
Last (with care) for long ;
But in time must break, may shiver
At a touch of wrong :

Having seen what looked most real
 Crumble into dust ;
 Now I chose that test and trial
 Should precede my trust.

I have seen a love demanding
 Time and hope and tears,
 Chaining all the past, exacting
 Bonds from future years ;
 Mind and heart, and joy and sorrow,
 Claiming as its fee :
 That was Love of Self, and never,
 Never Love of me!

I have seen a love forgetting
 All above, beyond,
 Linking every dream and fancy
 In a sweeter bond ;
 Counting every hour worthless,
 Which was cold or free : —
 That, perhaps, was — Love of Pleasure,
 But not Love of me!

I have seen a love whose patience
 Never turned aside,
 Full of tender, fond devices ;
 Constant, even when tried ;
 Smallest boons were held as victories,
 Drops that swelled the sea :
 That I think was — Love of Power,
 But not Love of me!

I have seen a love disdaining
Ease and pride and fame,
Burning even its own white pinions
Just to feed its flame :
Reigning thus, supreme, triumphant,
By the soul's decree ;
That was — Love of Love, I fancy,
But not Love of me!

I have heard — or dreamt, it may be —
What Love is when true :
How to test and how to try it,
Is the gift of few :
These few say (or did I dream it?)
That true Love abides
In these very things, but always
Has a soul besides.

Lives among the false loves, knowing
Just their peace and strife ;
Bears the self-same look, but always
Has an inner life.
Only a true heart can find it,
True as it is true,
Only eyes as clear and tender
Look it through and through.

If it dies, it will not perish
By Time's slow decay,
True Love only grows (they tell me)
Stronger, day by day :

Pain — has been its friend and comrade ;
Fate — it can defy ;
Only by its own sword, sometimes
Love can choose to die.

And its grave shall be more noble
And more sacred still,
Than a throne, where one less worthy
Reigns and rules at will.
Tell me then, do you dare offer
This true Love to me? . . .
Neither you nor I can answer ;
We will — wait and see!

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER.



I SAW THEE WEEP.

I.

I SAW thee weep — the big bright tear
Came o'er that eye of blue ;
And then methought it did appear
A violet dropping dew ;
I saw thee smile — the sapphire's blaze
Beside thee ceased to shine ;
It could not match the living rays
That fill'd that glance of thine.

II.

As clouds from yonder sun receive
A deep and yellow die,
Which scarce the shade of coming eve

Can banish from the sky,
Those smiles unto the moodiest mind
Their own pure joy impart ;
Their sunshine leaves a glow behind
That lightens o'er the heart.

LORD BYRON.



ORIGIN OF LOVE.

THE "Origin of Love!" — Ah, why
That cruel question ask of me,
When thou may'st read in many an eye
He starts to life on seeing thee?
And should'st thou seek his *end* to know :
My heart forebodes, my fears foresee,
He'll linger long in silent woe ;
But live — until I cease to be.

LORD BYRON.



THE DREAM.

I.

OUR life is twofold ; Sleep hath its own world,
A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and existence : Sleep hath its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality,
And dreams in their development have breath,
And tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy ;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They take a weight from off our waking toils,

They do divide our being ; they become
A portion of ourselves as of our time,
And look like heralds of eternity ;
They pass like spirits of the past, — they speak
Like sibyls of the future ; they have power
The tyranny of pleasure and of pain ;
They make us what we were not — what they will
And shake us with the vision that's gone by,
The dread of vanish'd shadows — Are they so?
Is not the past all shadow? What are they?
Creations of the mind? — The mind can make
Substance, and people planets of its own
With beings brighter than have been, and give
A breath to forms which can outlive all flesh.
I would recall a vision which I dream'd
Perchance in sleep — for in itself a thought,
A slumbering thought, is capable of years,
And curdles a long life into one hour.

II.

I saw two beings in the hues of youth
Standing upon a hill, a gentle hill,
Green and of mild declivity, the last
As 'twere the cape of a long ridge of such,
Save that there was no sea to lave its base,
But a most living landscape, and the wave
Of woods and cornfields, and the abodes of men
Scatter'd at intervals, and wreathing smoke
Arising from such rustic roofs ; — the hill
Was crowned with a peculiar diadem

Of trees, in circular array, so fix'd,
Not by the sport of nature, but of man :
These two, a maiden and a youth, were there
Gazing — the one on all that was beneath
Fair as herself — but the boy gazed on her ;
And both were young, and one was beautiful :
And both were young — yet not alike in youth.
As the sweet moon on the horizon's verge,
The maid was on the eve of womanhood ;
The boy had fewer summers, but his heart
Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye
There was but one beloved face on earth,
And that was shining on him ; he had look'd
Upon it till it could not pass away ;
He had no breath, no being, but in hers ;
She was his voice ; he did not speak to her,
But trembled on her words ; she was his sight,
For his eye follow'd hers, and saw with hers,
Which color'd all his objects : — he had ceased
To live within himself ; she was his life,
The ocean to the river of his thoughts,
Which terminated all : upon a tone.
A touch of hers, his blood would ebb and flow,
And his cheek change tempestuously — his heart
Unknowing of its cause of agony.
But she in these fond feelings had no share :
Her sighs were not for him ; to her he was
Even as a brother — but no more ; 'twas much
For brotherless she was, save in the name
Her infant friendship had bestow'd on him ;
Herself the solitary scion left

Of a time-honor'd race. — It was a name
Which pleased him, and yet pleased him not — and
why?

Time taught him a deep answer — when she loved
Another; even now she loved another,
And on the summit of that hill she stood
Looking afar if yet her lover's steed
Kept pace with her expectancy, and flew.

III.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
There was an ancient mansion, and before
Its walls there was a steed caparison'd :
Within an antique Oratory stood
The Boy of whom I spake ; — he was alone,
And pale, and pacing to and fro : anon
He sate him down, and seized a pen, and traced
Words which I could not guess of ; then he lean'd
His bow'd head on his hands, and shook as 'twere
With a convulsion — then arose again,
And with his teeth and quivering hands did tear
What he had written, but he shed no tears.
And he did calm himself, and fix his brow
Into a kind of quiet : as he paused,
The Lady of his love re-enter'd there ;
She was serene and smiling then, and yet
She knew she was by him beloved, — she knew,
For quickly comes such knowledge, that his heart
Was darken'd with her shadow, and she saw
That he was wretched, but she saw not all.

He rose, and with a cold and gentle grasp
He took her hand ; a moment o'er his face
A tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced, and then it faded, as it came ;
He dropp'd the hand he held, and with slow steps
Retired, but not as bidding her adieu,
For they did part with mutual smiles ; he pass'd
From out the massy gate of that old Hall,
And mounting on his steed he went his way ;
And ne'er repass'd that hoary threshold more.

IV.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Boy was sprung to manhood : in the wilds
Of fiery climes he made himself a home,
And his Soul drank their sunbeams : he was girt
With strange and dusky aspects ; he was not
Himself like what he had been ; on the sea
And on the shore he was a wanderer ;
There was a mass of many images
Crowded like waves upon me, but he was
A part of all : and in the last he lay
Reposing from the noontide sultriness,
Couch'd among fallen columns, in the shade
Of ruin'd walls that had survived the names
Of those who rear'd them ; by his sleeping side
Stood camels grazing, and some goodly steeds
Were fasten'd near a fountain ; and a man
Clad in a flowing garb did watch the while,
While many of his tribe slumber'd around,

And they were canopied by the blue sky,
So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,
That God alone was to be seen in Heaven.

V.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream,
The Lady of his love was wed with One
Who did not love her better : — in her home
A thousand leagues from his, — her native home,
She dwelt, begirt with growing Infancy,
Daughters and sons of Beauty, — but behold!
Upon her face there was the tint of grief,
The settled shadow of an inward strife,
And an unquiet drooping of the eye
As if its lid were charged with unshed tears.
What could her grief be? — she had all she loved,
And he who had so loved her was not there
To trouble with bad hopes, or evil wish,
Or ill repress'd affliction, her pure thoughts.
What could her grief be? — She had loved him
not,
Nor given him cause to deem himself beloved,
Nor could he be a part of that which prey'd
Upon her mind — a spectre of the past.

VI.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Wanderer was return'd. — I saw him stand
Before an Altar — with a gentle bride ;
Her face was fair, but was not that which made

The Starlight of his Boyhood ; as he stood
Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came
The selfsame aspect, and the quivering shock
That in the antique Oratory shook
His bosom in its solitude ; and then —
As in that hour — a moment o'er his face
The tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced, — and then it faded as it came,
And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
And all things reel'd around him ; he could see
Not that which was, nor that which should have
been,

But the old mansion, and the accustom'd hall,
And the remember'd chambers, and the place,
The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,
All things pertaining to that place and hour,
And her who was his destiny, came back
And thrust themselves between him and the light :
What business had they there at such a time ?

VII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The lady of his love ; — Oh ! she was changed
As by the sickness of the soul ; her mind
Had wander'd from its dwelling, and her eyes
They had not their own lustre, but the look
Which is not of the earth ; she was become
The queen of a fantastic realm ; her thoughts
Were combinations of disjointed things ;

And forms impalpable and unperceived
Of others' sight familiar were to hers.
And this the world calls phrensy, but the wise
Have a far deeper madness, and the glance
Of melancholy is a fearful gift;
What is it but the telescope of truth?
Which strips the distance of its phantasies,
And brings life near in utter nakedness,
Making the cold reality too real!

VIII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Wanderer was alone as heretofore,
The beings which surrounded him were gone,
Or were at war with him; he was a mark
For blight and desolation, compass'd round
With Hatred and Contention; Pain was mix'd
In all which was served up to him, until
Like to the Pontic monarch of old days,
He fed on poisons, and they had no power,
But were a kind of nutriment, he lived
Through that which had been death to many men,
And made him friends of mountains: with the stars
And the quick Spirit of the Universe
He held his dialogues; and they did teach
To him the magic of their mysteries;
To him the book of Night was open'd wide
And voices from the deep abyss revealed
A marvel and a secret — Be it so.

IX.

My dream was past ; it had no future change.
It was of a strange order, that the doom
Of these two creatures should be thus traced out
Almost like a reality — the one
To end in madness — both in misery.

LORD BYRON.



LOVE.

ALL thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay
Beside the ruin'd tower.

The moonshine stealing o'er the scene
Had blended with the lights of eve ;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve!

She lean'd against the arm'd man,
The statue of the arm'd knight ;
She stood and listen'd to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!
She loves me best, whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I play'd a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story —
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listen'd with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace;
For well she knew, I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand;
And that for ten long years he woo'd
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined: and ah!
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love
Interpreted my own.

She listen'd with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face.

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,
And that he cross'd the mountain-woods,
Nor rested day nor night ;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade,

There came and look'd him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright ;
And that he knew it was a Fiend,
This miserable Knight !

And that unknowing what he did,
He leap'd amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The Lady of the Land ;

And how she wept, and clasp'd his knees ;
And how she tended him in vain ;
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain ;

And that she nursed him in a cave,
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay ;

— His dying words — but when I reach'd
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturb'd her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrill'd my guileless Genevieve;
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherish'd long.

She wept with pity and delight,
She blush'd with love, and virgin shame;
And like the murmur of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved — she stepp'd aside,
As conscious of my look she stept —
Then suddenly, with timorous eye,
She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,
She press'd me with a meek embrace;
And bending back her head, look'd up,
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art
That I might rather feel than see
— The swelling of her heart.

I calm'd her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride;
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous Bride.

S. T. COLERIDGE.



ALL FOR LOVE.

O TALK not to me of a name great in story;
The days of our youth are the days of our glory;
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow that is
wrinkled?

'Tis but as a dead flower with May-dew besprinkled:
Then away with all such from the head that is
hoary—

What care I for the wreaths that can only give glory?

O Fame!—if I e'er took delight in thy praises,
'Twas less for the sake of thy high-sounding phrases,
Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one discover
She thought that I was not unworthy to love her.

There chiefly I sought thee, there only I found thee ;
Her glance was the best of the rays that surround
 thee ;
When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright in my
 story,
I knew it was love, and I felt it was glory.

LORD BYRON.



THE LOST LOVE.

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove ;
A maid whom there were none to praise,
And very few to love.

A violet by a mossy stone
Half-hidden from the eye!
— Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be ;
But she is in her grave, and O!
The difference to me!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.



SHALL I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate :
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date :

Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed ;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimmed ;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st ;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st :
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

SHE is not fair to outward view
As many maidens be ;
Her loveliness I never knew
Until she smiled on me.
O then I saw her eye was bright,
A well of love, a spring of light.

But now her looks are coy and cold,
To mine they ne'er reply,
And yet I cease not to behold
The love-light in her eye :
Her very frowns are fairer far
Than smiles of other maidens are.

H. COLERIDGE.

MUSIC, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory —
Odors, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heap'd for the beloved's bed ;
And so thy thoughts, when Thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

P. B. SHELLEY.



THE TRUE BEAUTY.

HE that loves a rosy cheek
Or a coral lip admires,
Or from starlike eyes doth seek
Fuel to maintain his fires ;
As old Time makes these decay,
So his flames must waste away.

But a smooth and steadfast mind,
Gentle thoughts, and calm desires,
Hearts with equal love combined,
Kindle never-dying fires : —
Where these are not, I despise
Lovely cheeks or lips or eyes.

T. CAREW.



TO DIANEME.

SWEET, be not proud of those two eyes
Which starlike sparkle in their skies ;
Nor be you proud, that you can see
All hearts your captives ; yours yet free :

Be you not proud of that rich hair
Which wantons with the lovesick air ;
Whenas that ruby which you wear,
Sunk from the tip of your soft ear,
Will last to be a precious stone
When all your world of beauty's gone.

R. HERRICK.



Go, lovely Rose!
Tell her, that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts, where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired :
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die! that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee :
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair!

E. WALLER.

BLIND LOVE.

O ME! what eyes hath love put in my head
Which have no correspondence with true sight :
Or if they have, where is my judgment fled
That censures falsely what they see aright?

If that be fair whereon my false eyes dote,
What means the world to say it is not so?
If it be not, then love doth well denote
Love's eye is not so true as all men's : No,

How can it! O how can love's eye be true,
That is so vex'd with watching and with tears?
No marvel then though I mistake my view :
The sun itself sees not till heaven clears.

O cunning Love! with tears thou keep'st me blind,
Lest eyes well-seeing thy foul faults should find!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.



WHERE SHALL THE LOVER REST?

WHERE shall the lover rest
Whom the fates sever
From his true maiden's breast
Parted forever?
Where, through groves deep and high
Sounds the far billow,

Where early violets die
Under the willow.
Eleu loro
Soft shall be his pillow.

There, through the summer day
Cool streams are laving :
There, while the tempests sway,
Scarce are boughs waving ;
There thy rest shalt thou take,
Parted forever,
Never again to wake
Never, O never!
Eleu loro
Never, O never!

Where shall the traitor rest,
He, the deceiver,
Who could win maiden's breast,
Ruin, and leave her?
In the lost battle,
Borne down by the flying,
Where mingles war's rattle
With groans of the dying ;
Eleu loro
There shall he be lying.

Her wing shall the eagle flap
O'er the false-hearted ;
His warm blood the wolf shall lap
Ere life be parted :

Shame and dishonor sit
By his grave ever ;
Blessing shall hallow it
Never, O never!
Eleu loro
Never, O never!

SIR W. SCOTT.



ONE word is too often profaned
For me to profane it,
One feeling too falsely disdain'd
For thee to disdain it.
One hope is too like despair
For prudence to smother,
And Pity from thee more dear
Than that from another.

I can give not what men call love ;
But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
And the Heavens reject not :
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?

P. B. SHELLEY.

A BIRTHDAY.

My heart is like a singing bird
Whose nest is in a watered shoot ;
My heart is like an apple tree
Whose boughs are bent with thickest fruit ;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
That paddles in a halcyon sea —
My heart is gladder than all these,
Because my love is come to me.

Raise me a dais of silk and down,
Hang it with vair and purple dyes,
Carve it in doves, and pomegranates,
And peacocks with a hundred eyes ;
Work it in gold and silver grapes,
In leaves, and silver fleurs-de-lys,
Because the birthday of my life
Is come, my love is come to me.

CHRISTINA GEORGIANA ROSSETTI.



FROM "THE WINTER'S TALE."

WHAT you do
Still betters what is done. When you speak,
sweet,
I'd have you do it ever ; when you sing,
I'd have you buy and sell so, so give alms,
Pray so ; and, for the ordering of your affairs,

To sing them too: when you do dance, I wish you
A wave o' the sea, that you might ever do
Nothing but that; move still, still so,
And own no other function. Each your doing,
So singular in each particular,
Crowns what you are doing in the present deed,
That all your acts are queens.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.



SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE.

Go from me. Yet I feel that I shall stand
Henceforward in thy shadow. Nevermore
Alone upon the threshold of my door
Of individual life, I shall command
The uses of my soul, nor lift my hand
Serenely in the sunshine as before,
Without the sense of that which I forbore, . . .
Thy touch upon the palm. The widest land
Doom takes to part us, leaves thy heart in mine
With pulses that beat double. What I do
And what I dream include thee, as the wine
Must taste of its own grapes. And when I sue
God for myself, He hears that name of thine,
And sees within my eyes, the tears of two.



If thou must love me, let it be for nought
Except for love's sake only. Do not say
"I love her for her smile . . . her look . . . her way
Of speaking gently, . . . for a trick of thought

That falls in well with mine, and certes brought
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day "—
For these things in themselves, Beloved, may
Be changed, or change for thee,—and love, so
wrought,
May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry,—
A creature might forget to weep, who bore
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby!
But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou may'st love on, through love's eternity.

Beloved, my Beloved, when I think
That thou wast in the world a year ago,
What time I sate alone here in the snow
And saw no footprint, heard the silence sink
No moment at thy voice, . . . but, link by link,
Went counting all my chains, as if that so
They never could fall off at any blow
Struck by thy possible hand . . . why, thus I drink
Of life's great cup of wonder! Wonderful,
Never to feel thee thrill the day or night
With personal act or speech,—nor ever cull
Some prescience of thee with the blossoms white
Thou sawest growing! Atheists are as dull,
Who cannot guess God's presence out of sight.

Is it indeed so? If I lay here dead,
Would'st thou miss any life in losing mine?
And would the sun for thee more coldly shine,

Because of grave-damps falling round my head?
I marvelled, my Beloved, when I read
Thy thought so in the letter. I am thine —
But . . . *so* much to thee? Can I pour thy wine
While my hands tremble? Then my soul, instead
Of dreams of death, resumes life's lower range.
Then, love me, Love! look on me . . . breathe on
me!

As brighter ladies do not count it strange,
For love, to give up acres and degree,
I yield the grave for thy sake, and exchange
My near sweet view of Heaven, for earth with thee!

Thou comest! all is said without a word.
I sit beneath thy looks, as children do
In the noon-sun, with souls that tremble through
Their happy eyelids from an unaverred
Yet prodigal inward joy. Behold, I erred
In that last doubt! and yet I cannot rue
The sin most, but the occasion . . . that we two
Should for a moment stand unministered
By a mutual presence. Ah, keep near and close,
Thou dovelike help! and, when my fears would rise,
With thy broad heart serenely interpose.
Brood down with thy divine sufficiencies
These thoughts which tremble when bereft of those,
Like callow birds left desert to the skies.

If I leave all for thee, wilt thou exchange
And be all to me? Shall I never miss

Home-talk and blessing and the common kiss
That comes to each in turn, nor count it strange,
When I look up, to drop on a new range
Of walls and floors . . . another home than this?
Nay, wilt thou fill that place by me which is
Filled by dead eyes too tender to know change?
That's hardest. If to conquer love, has tried,
To conquer grief, tries more . . . as all things prove;
For grief indeed is love and grief beside.
Alas I have grieved so I am hard to love.
Yet love me — wilt thou? Open thine heart wide,
And fold within, the wet wings of thy dove.

Because thou hast the power and own'st the grace
To look through and behind this mask of me,
(Against which years have beat thus blanchingly
With their rains,) and behold my soul's true face,
The dim and weary witness of life's race! —
Because thou hast the faith and love to see,
Through that same soul's distracting lethargy,
The patient angel waiting for a place
In the new Heavens! — because nor sin nor woe,
Nor God's infliction, nor death's neighborhood,
Nor all which others viewing, turn to go, . . .
Nor all which makes me tired of all, self-viewed, . . .
Nothing repels thee, . . . Dearest, teach me so
To pour out gratitude as thou dost, good.
How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight

For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of everyday's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints, — I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life! — and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.



FROM "THE EPITHALAMIUM."

OPEN the temple gates unto my love,
Open them wide that she may enter in,
And all the posts adorn as doth behove,
And all the pillars deck with garlands trim,
For to receive this saint with honor due,
That cometh in to you.
With trembling steps, and humble reverence,
She cometh in, before the Almighty's view:
Of her, ye virgins, learn obedience,
When so ye come into those holy places,
To humble your proud faces:
Bring her up to the high altar, that she may
The sacred ceremonies there partake,
The which do endless matrimony make;
And let the roaring organs loudly play

The praises of the Lord in lively notes ;
The whiles, with hollow throats,
The choristers the joyous anthem sing,
That all the woods may answer, and their echo ring.
Behold, whiles she before the altar stands,
Hearing the holy priest that to her speaks,
And blesseth her with his two happy hands,
How the red roses flush up in her cheeks,
And the pure snow, with goodly vermeil stain,
Like crimson dyed in grain ;
That even the angels, which continually
About the sacred altar do remain,
Forget their service, and about her fly,
Oft peeping in her face, that seems more fair
The more they on it stare.
But her sad eyes, still fastened on the ground
Are governed with goodly modesty,
That suffers not one look to glance awry,
Which may let in a little thought unsound.
Why blush ye, love, to give to me your hand,
The pledge of all our band?
Sing, ye sweet angels, alleluia sing.
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

EDMUND SPENSER.



A COMPLAINT.

THERE is a change, — and I am poor ;
Your love hath been, nor long ago,
A fountain at my fond heart's door,

Whose only business was to flow ;
And flow it did, not taking heed
Of its own bounty, or my need.

What happy moments did I count !
Blest was I then all bliss above !
Now, for that consecrated fount
Of murmuring, sparkling, living love,
What have I ? Shall I dare to tell ?
A comfortless and hidden well.

A well of love ; it may be deep, —
I trust it is, — and never dry.
What matter ? If the waters sleep
In silence and obscurity.
Such change, and at the very door
Of my fond heart, hath made me poor.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.



TO ANTHEA.

BID me to live, and I will live
Thy protestant to be :
Or bid me love, and I will give
A loving heart to thee.

A heart as soft, a heart as kind,
A heart as sound and free,
As in the whole world thou canst find.
That heart I'll give to thee.

Bid that heart stay, and it will stay,
To honor thy decree ;
Or bid it languish quite away,
And 't shall do so for thee.

Bid me to weep, and I will weep,
While I have eyes to see,
And having none, yet I will keep
A heart to weep for thee.

Bid me despair, and I'll despair
Under that cypress tree :
Or bid me die, and I will dare
E'en death, to die for thee.

Thou art my life, my love, my heart,
The very eyes of me,
And hast command of every part,
To live and die for thee.

ROBERT HERRICK.



PASSAGES FROM "PARADISE LOST."

UNDER his forming hands a creature grew,
Manlike, but different sex, so lovely fair,
That what seemed fair in all the world, seemed now
Mean, or in her summed up, in her contained,
And in her looks, which from that time infused
Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,
And into all things from her air inspired
The spirit of love and amorous delight.

She disappeared, and left me dark ; I waked
To find her, or forever to deplore
Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure :
When out of hope, beheld her, not far off,
Such as I saw her in my dreams, adorned
With what all earth or heaven could bestow
To make her amiable. On she came,
Led by her heavenly Maker, though unseen,
And guided by his voice, nor uninformed
Of nuptial sanctity and marriage rites :
Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love!

* * * * *

If death

Consort with thee, death is to me as life,
So forcible within my heart I feel
The bond of nature draw me to my own,
My own in thee, for what thou art is mine ;
Our state cannot be severed, we are one,
One flesh, to lose thee were to lose myself.

* * * * *

With thee to go

Is to stay here ; without thee here to stay,
Is to go hence unwilling ; thou to me
Art all things under heaven, all places thou,
Who for my wilful crime art banished hence.

JOHN MILTON.

SONG.

I PRITHEE send me back my heart,
Since I cannot have thine,
For if from yours you will not part,
Why, then, shouldst thou have mine?

Yet now I think on't, let it lie;
To find it were in vain;
For thou'st a thief in either eye
Would steal it back again.

Why should two hearts in one breast lie,
And yet not lodge together?
O Love! where is thy sympathy,
If thus our breasts thou sever?

But love is such a mystery,
I cannot find it out;
For when I think I'm best resolved,
I then am in most doubt.

Then farewell care, and farewell woe,
I will no longer pine:
For I'll believe I have her heart
As much as she has mine.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING.

A MATCH.

IF love were what the rose is,
And I were like the leaf,
Our lives would grow together
In sad or singing weather,

Blown fields or flowerful closes,
Green pleasure or gray grief;
If love were what the rose is,
And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,
And love were like the tune,
With double sound and single
Delight our lips would mingle,
With kisses glad as birds are
That get sweet rain at noon;
If I were what the words are
And love were like the tune.

If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death,
We'd shine and snow together
Ere March made sweet the weather
With daffodil and starling
And hours of fruitful breath;
If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy,
We'd play for lives and seasons
With loving looks and treasons
And tears of night and morrow
And laughs of maid and boy;
If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy.

If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May,
We'd throw with leaves for hours
And draw for days with flowers,
Till day like night were shady
And night were bright like day;
If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May.

If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain,
We'd hunt down love together,
Pluck out his flying feather,
And teach his feet a measure,
And find his mouth a rein;
If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.



LINES.

UNFELT, unheard, unseen,
I've left my little queen,
Her languid arms in silver slumber lying.
Ah! through their nestling touch,
Who — who can tell how much
There is for madness — cruel, or complying?

Those faery lids how sleek!
Those lips how moist! — they speak,

In ripest quiet, shadows of sweet sounds :
 Into my fancy's ear
 Melting a burden dear,
How "love doth know no fulness, and no bounds."

JOHN KEATS.



IF TO THY HEART I WERE AS NEAR.

IF to thy heart I were as near
 As thou art near to mine,
I'd hardly care though a' the year
Nae sun on earth suld shine, my dear!
 Nae sun on earth suld shine!

Twin starries are thy glancing een, —
 A warld they'd licht, and mair ;
And gin that ye be my Christine,
Ae blink to me ye'll spare, my dear,
 Ae blink to me ye'll spare!

My leesome may I've wooed too lang ;
 Aneath the trystin' tree
I've sung till a' the plantins rang
Wi' lays o' love for thee, my dear,
 Wi' lays o' love for thee!

The dew-drops glisten on the green,
 The laverlocks lilt on high.
We'll forth and down the lane, Christine,
And kiss when nane is nigh, my dear,
 And kiss when nane is nigh!

WILLIAM MOTHERWELL.

CAELI.

IF stars were really watching eyes
Of angel armies in the skies,
I should forget all watchers there,
And only for your glances care.

And if your eyes were really stars
With leagues that none can mete for bars
To keep me from their longed-for day,
I could not feel more far away!

GATHERED ROSES.

ONLY a bee made prisoner,
Caught in a gathered rose!
Was he not 'ware a flower so fair
For the first gatherer grows?

Only a heart made prisoner,
Going out free no more!
Was he not 'ware a face so fair
Must have been gathered before?

FRANCIS W. BOURDILLON.

THE TIME I'VE LOST IN WOOING.

THE time I've lost in wooing,
In watching and pursuing
The light that lies
In woman's eyes,
Has been my heart's undoing.

Though Wisdom oft has sought me,
I scorned the lore she brought me,
 My only books
 Were woman's looks,
And folly's all they've taught me.

THOMAS MOORE.



JOHN ANDERSON, MY JO.

JOHN ANDERSON, my jo, John,
 When we were first acquaint,
Your locks were like the raven,
 Your bonnie brow was brent ;
But now your brow is beld, John,
 Your locks are like the snaw ;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
 John Anderson, my jo.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
 We clamb the hill thegither ;
And monie a canty day, John,
 We've had wi' ane anither :
Now we maun totter down, John,
 But hand in hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
 John Anderson, my jo.

ROBERT BURNS.

FADED LEAVES.

THE RIVER.

STILL glides the stream, slow drops the boat
Under the rustling poplars' shade ;
Silent the swans beside us float :
None speaks, none heeds ; ah, turn thy head !

Let those arch eyes now softly shine,
That mocking mouth grow sweetly bland ;
Ah ! let them rest, those eyes, on mine !
On mine let rest that lovely hand !

My pent-up tears oppress my brain,
My heart is swoln with love unsaid.
Ah ! let me weep, and tell my pain,
And on thy shoulder rest my head !

Before I die, — before the soul,
Which now is mine, must re-attain
Immunity from my control,
And wander round the world again ;

Before this teased, o'er-labored heart
Forever leaves its vain employ,
Dead to its deep habitual smart,
And dead to hopes of future joy.

TOO LATE.

Each on his own strict line we move,
And some find death ere they find love;
So far apart their lives are thrown
From the twin soul that halves their own.

And sometimes, by still harder fate,
The lovers meet, but meet too late.
— Thy heart is mine! *True, true! ah, true!*
— Then, love, thy hand! *Ah, no! adieu!*

LONGING.

Come to me in my dreams, and then
By day I shall be well again!
For then the night will more than pay
The hopeless longing of the day.

Come, as thou cam'st a thousand times,
A messenger from radiant climes,
And smile on thy new world, and be
As kind to others as to me!

Or, as thou never cam'st in sooth,
Come now, and let me dream it truth;
And part my hair, and kiss my brow,
And say, *My love! why sufferest thou?*

Come to me in my dreams, and then
By day I shall be well again!
For then the night will more than pay
The hopeless longing of the day.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.



URANIA.

SHE smiles and smiles, and will not sigh,
While we for hopeless passion die ;
Yet she could love, those eyes declare,
Were but men nobler than they are.

Eagerly once her gracious ken
Was turned upon the sons of men ;
But light the serious visage grew —
She looked, and smiled, and saw them through.

Our petty souls, our strutting wits,
Our labored, puny passion-fits, —
Ah, may she scorn them still, till we
Scorn them as bitterly as she!

Yet show her once, ye heavenly Powers,
One of some worthier race than ours!
One for whose sake she once might prove
How deeply she who scorns can love.

His eyes be like the starry lights,
His voice like sounds of summer nights ;
In ðall his lovely mien let pierce
The magic of the universe!

And she to him will reach her hand,
And gazing in his eyes will stand,
And know her friend, and weep for glee,
And cry, *Long, long I've looked for thee.*

Then will she weep : with smiles, till then,
Coldly she mocks the sons of men ;
Till then, her lovely eyes maintain
Their pure, unwavering, deep disdain.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.



SIR LAUNCELOT AND QUEEN GUINE- VERE.

A FRAGMENT.

LIKE souls that balance joy and pain,
With tears and smiles from heaven again
The maiden Spring upon the plain
Came in a sun-lit fall of rain.

 In crystal vapor everywhere
Blue isles of heaven laugh'd between,
And, far in forest-deeps unseen,
The topmost elm-tree gather'd green
 From draughts of balmy air.

Sometimes the linnet piped his song ;
Sometimes the throstle whistled strong :
Sometimes the sparrowhawk, wheel'd along,
Hush'd all the groves from fear of wrong :

By grassy capes with fuller sound
In curves the yellowing river ran,
And drooping chestnut-buds began
To spread into the perfect fan,
Above the teeming ground.

Then, in the boyhood of the year,
Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere
Rode thro' the coverts of the deer,
With blissful treble ringing clear.

She seem'd a part of joyous Spring ;
A gown of grass-green silk she wore,
Buckled with golden clasps before ;
A light-green tuft of plumes she bore
Closed in a golden ring.

Now on some twisted ivy-net,
Now by some tinkling rivulet,
In mosses mixt with violet
Her cream-white mule his pastern set ;
And fleeter now she skimm'd the plains
Than she whose elfin prancer springs
By night to eery warblings,
When all the glimmering moorland rings
With jingling bridle-reins.

As she fled fast thro' sun and shade,
The happy winds upon her play'd,
Blowing the ringlet from the braid :
She look'd so lovely, as she sway'd
The rein with dainty finger-tips,

A man had given all other bliss,
And all his worldly worth for this,
To waste his whole heart in one kiss
Upon her perfect lips.

TENNYSON.



GUINEVERE.

BUT I was first of all the kings who drew
The knighthood-errant of this realm and all
The realms together under me, their Head,
In that fair order of my Table Round,
A glorious company, the flower of men,
To serve as model for the mighty world,
And be the fair beginning of a time.
I made them lay their hands in mine and swear
To reverence the King, as if he were
Their conscience, and their conscience as their
King,
To break the heathen and uphold the Christ,
To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,
To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,
To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,
To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
And worship her by years of noble deeds,
Until they won her, for indeed I knew
Of no more subtle master under heaven
Than is the maiden passion for a maid,
Not only to keep down the base in man,
But teach high thought, and amiable words,

And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
And love of truth, and all that makes a man.

* * * * *

“Yet think not that I come to urge thy crimes,
I did not come to curse thee, Guinevere,
I, whose vast pity almost make me die
To see thee, laying there thy golden head,
My pride in happier summers, at my feet,
The wrath which forced my thoughts on that fierce
law,
The doom of treason and the flaming death,
(When first I learnt thee hidden here) is past
The pang — which while I weigh’d thy heart with
one

Too wholly true to dream untruth in thee,
Made my tears burn — is also past, in part.
And all is past, the sin is sinn’d, and I,
Lo! I forgive thee, as Eternal God
Forgives: do thou for thine own soul the rest.
But how to take last leave of all I loved?
O golden hair, with which I used to play
Not knowing! O imperial-moulded form,
And beauty such as never woman wore,
Until it came a kingdom’s curse with thee —
I cannot touch thy lips, they are not mine,
But Lancelot’s: nay, they never were the King’s.
I cannot take thy hand; that too is flesh,
And in the flesh thou hast sinn’d: and mine own
flesh,

Here looking down on thine polluted, cries
‘I loathe thee:’ yet not less, O Guinevere,

For I was ever virgin save for thee,
My love thro' flesh hath wrought into my life
So far, that my doom is, I love thee still.
Let no man dream but that I love thee still.
Perchance, and so thou purify thy soul,
And so thou lean on our fair father Christ,
Hereafter in that world where all are pure
We two may meet before high God, and thou
Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine, and know
I am thine husband — not a smaller soul,
Nor Lancelot, nor another. Leave me that,
I charge thee, my last hope. Now must I hence.
Thro' the thick night I hear the trumpet blow:
They summon me their King to lead mine hosts
Far down to that great battle in the west,
Where I must strike against the man they call
My sister's son — no kin of mine, who leagues
With lords of the White-Horse, heathen, and
knights —
Traitors — and strike him dead, and meet myself
Death, or I know not what mysterious doom
And thou remaining here wilt learn the event:
But hither shall I never come again,
Never lie by thy side, see thee no more,
'Farewell!'



TENNYSON.

ALTHO' THOU MAUN NEVER BE MINE.

ALTHO' thou maun never be mine

Altho' even hope is denied

'Tis sweeter for thee despairing

Than aught in the world beside — Jessy.

I mourn thro' the gay, gaudy day,
As, hopeless, I muse on thy charms :
But welcome the dream o' sweet slumber,
For then I am lockt in thy arms — Jessy!

I guess by the dear angel smile,
I guess by the love-rolling ee ;
But why urge the tender confession
'Gainst fortune's cruel decree — Jessy!

ROBERT BURNS.

CHANGES.

WHOM first we love, you know, we seldom wed.
Time rules us all. And Life, indeed, is not
The thing we planned it out ere hope was dead.
And then, we women cannot choose our lot.

Much must be borne which it is hard to bear ;
Much given away which it were sweet to keep.
God help us all! who need, indeed his care.
And yet, I know the Shepherd loves his sheep.

My little boy begins to babble now
Upon my knee his earliest infant prayer.
He has his father's eager eyes I know ;
And, they say, too, his mother's sunny hair.

But when he sleeps and smiles upon my knee,
And I can feel his light breath come and go,
I think of one (Heaven help and pity me!)
Who loved me, and whom I loved, long ago :

Who might have been . . . ah what, I dare not think!

We are all changed. God judges for us best.
God help us do our duty, and not shrink.
And trust in Heaven humbly for the rest!

But blame us women not, if some appear
Too cold at times; and some too gay and light.
Some griefs gnaw deep. Some woes are hard to bear.

Who knows the past? and who can judge us right?

Ah! were we judged by what we might have been,
And not by what we are — too apt to fall!
My little child — he sleeps and smiles between
These thoughts and me. In heaven we shall know all!

ROBERT BULWER LYTTON.

TWO LOVES.

DEEP within my heart of hearts, dear,
Bound with all its strings,
Two Loves are together reigning,
Both are crowned like Kings;
While my life, still uncomplaining,
Rests beneath their wings.

So they both will rule my heart, dear,
Till it cease to beat;

No sway can be deeper, stronger,
Truer, more complete ;
Growing, as it lasts the longer
Sweeter, and more sweet.

One all life and time transfigures ;
Piercing through and through
Meaner things with magic splendor,
Old, yet ever new :
This — so strong and yet so tender —
Is . . . my Love for you.

Should it fail, — forgive my doubting
In this world of pain, —
Yet my other Love would ever
Steadfastly remain ;
And I know that I could never
Turn to that in vain.

Though its radiance may be fainter,
Yet its task is wide ;
For it lives to comfort sorrows,
Strengthen, calm, and guide,
And from Trust and Honor borrows
All its peace and pride.

Will you blame my dreaming, even
If the first were flown ?
Ah, I would not live without it,
It is all your own :
And the other — can you doubt it ? —
Yours, and yours alone.

KING AND SLAVE.

IF in my soul, dear,
 An omen should dwell,
Bidding me pause, ere
 I love thee too well ;
If the whole circle
 Of noble and wise,
With stern forebodings,
 Between us should rise ; —

I will tell *them*, dear,
 That Love reigns — a King,
Where storms cannot reach him,
 And words cannot sting ;
He counts it dishonor
 His faith to recall ;
He trusts ; — and forever
 He gives — and gives all !

I will tell *thee*, dear,
 That Love is — a Slave,
Who dreads thought of freedom,
 As life dreads the grave ;
And if doubt or peril
 Of change there may be,
Such fear would but drive him
 Still nearer to thee !

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER.

LOVE.

WE cannot live, except thus mutually
We alternate, aware or unaware,
The reflex act of life : and when we bear
Our virtue onward most impulsively,
Most full of invocation, and to be
Most instantly compellant, certes, there
We live most life, whoever breathes most air
And counts his dying years by sun and sea.
But when a soul, by choice and conscience, doth
Throw out her full force on another soul,
The conscience and the concentration both
Make mere life, Love. For Life in perfect whole
And aim consummated, is Love in sooth,
As nature's magnet-heat rounds pole with pole.

MRS. BROWNING.



FIDELIS.

You have taken back the promise
That you spoke so long ago ;
Taken back the heart you gave me, —
I must even let it go.
Where love once has breathed, Pride dieth :
So I struggled, but in vain,
First to keep the links together,
Then to piece the broken chain.

But it might not be — so freely
All your friendship I restore,
And the heart that I had taken
As my own forevermore.
No shade of reproach shall touch you,
Dread no more a claim from me :
But I will not have you fancy
That I count myself as free.

I am bound by the old promise ;
What can break that golden chain?
Not even the words that you have spoken,
Or the sharpness of my pain :
Do you think because you fail me
And draw back your hand to-day,
That from out the heart I gave you
My strong love can fade away?

It will live. No eyes may see it ;
In my soul it will lie deep,
Hidden from all ; but I shall feel it
Often stirring in its sleep.
So remember, that the friendship,
Which you now think poor and vain,
Will endure in hope and patience,
Till you ask for it again.

Perhaps in some long twilight hour,
Like those we have known of old,
When past shadows gather round you,
And your present friends grow cold,
You may stretch your hands out towards me, —

Ah! you will — I know not when —
I shall nurse my love and keep it
Faithfully, for you, till then.

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER.

A LOVE TOKEN.

Do you grieve no costly offering
To the Lady you can make?
One there is, and gifts less worthy
Queens have stooped to take.

Take a Heart of virgin silver,
Fashion it with heavy blows,
Cast it into Love's hot furnace
When it fiercest glows.

With Pain's sharpest point transfix it,
And then carve, in letters fair,
Tender dreams and quaint devices,
Fancies sweet and rare.

Set within it Hope's blue sapphire,
Many-changing opal fears,
Blood-red ruby-stones of daring,
Mixed with pearly tears.

And when you have wrought and labored
Till the gift is all complete,
You may humbly lay your offering
At the Lady's feet.

Should her mood perchance be gracious,
With disdainful, smiling pride,
She will place it with the trinkets
Glittering at her side.

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER.



TO MARY IN HEAVEN.

THOU lingering star, with less'ning ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,
Again thou usher'st in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn.
O Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
Seest thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

That sacred hour can I forget?
Can I forget the hallow'd grove,
Where by the winding Ayr we met,
To live one day of parting love?
Eternity will not efface
Those records dear of transports past;
Thy image at our last embrace;
Ah! little thought we 'twas our last!

Ayr gurgling kiss'd his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wildwoods, thick'ning green;
The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,
Twin'd am'rous round the raptur'd scene.

The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on ev'ry spray,
Till too, too soon, the glowing west
Proclaim'd the speed of winged day.

Still o'er these scenes my mem'ry wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care!
Time but the impression deeper makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
My Mary, dear departed shade!
Where is thy blissful place of rest?
Seest thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

ROBERT BURNS.



MARGARET ALONE AT HER SPINNING- WHEEL.

(From Faust.)

My Heart's oppress'd,
My peace is o'er;
I know no rest,
No, nevermore.

The world's a grave
Where he is not;
And grief is now
My bitter lot.

My wilder'd brain
Is overwrought;
My feeble senses
Are distraught.

My heart's oppress'd,
My peace is o'er;
I know no rest,
No, nevermore.

For him I watch
The live-long day,
For him alone
Abroad I stray.

His lofty step,
His bearing high,
The smile of his lip,
The power of his eye!

His witching words,
Their tones of bliss,
His hand's fond pressure,
And then, his kiss!

My heart's oppress'd,
My peace is o'er,
I know no rest,
No, nevermore.

My bosom aches
To feel him near.
Ah, could I clasp
And fold him here!

In love's fond blisses
Entranc'd I'd lie,
And die on his kisses,
In ecstasy!

GOETHE.



MARGARET TO DOLCINO.

Ask if I love thee? Oh, smiles cannot tell
Plainer what tears are now showing too well.
Had I not loved thee, my sky had been clear :
Had I not loved thee, I had not been here,
Weeping by thee.

Ask if I love thee? How else could I borrow
Pride from man's slander, and strength from my
sorrow?
Laugh when they sneer at the fanatic's bride,
Knowing no bliss, save to toil and abide
Weeping by thee.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.



DOLCINO TO MARGARET.

THE world goes up and the world goes down,
And the sunshine follows the rain,
And yesterday's sneer and yesterday's frown
Can never come over again,
Sweet wife,
No, never come over again.

For woman is warm though man be cold,
And the night will follow the day,
Till the heart which at even was weary and old
Can rise in the morning gay,
Sweet wife,
To its work in the morning gay.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.



LOVE'S OMNIPRESENCE.

WERE I as base as is the lowly plain,
And you, my Love, as high as heaven above,
Yet should the thoughts of me your humble swain
Ascend to heaven, in honor of my love.

Were I as high as heaven above the plain,
And you, my Love, as humble and as low
As are the deepest bottoms of the main,
Whereso'er you were, with you my love should go.

Were you the earth, dear Love, and I the skies,
My love should shine on you like to the sun,
And look upon you with ten thousand eyes
Till heaven wax'd blind, and till the world were done.

Whereso'er I am, below, or else above you,
Whereso'er you are, my heart shall truly love you.

J. SYLVESTER.

INCLUSIONS.

I.

OH, wilt thou have my hand, Dear, to lie along in
thine?

As a little stone in a running stream, it seems to lie
and pine!

Now drop the poor pale hand, Dear, . . . unfit to
plight with thine.

II.

Oh, wilt thou have my cheek, Dear, drawn closer to
thine own?

My cheek is white, my cheek is worn, by many a
tear run down.

Now leave a little space, Dear, . . . lest it should
wet thine own.

III.

Oh, must thou have my soul, Dear, commingled
with thy soul?—

Red grows the cheek, and warm the hand, . . . the
part is in the whole! . . .

Nor hands nor cheeks keep separate, when soul is
joined to soul.

MRS. BROWNING.

INSUFFICIENCY.

I.

THERE is no one beside thee, and no one above
thee ;
Thou standest alone, as the nightingale sings!
Yet my words that would praise thee are impotent
things,
For none can express thee though all should ap-
prove thee!
I love thee so, Dear, that I only can love thee.

II.

SAY, what can I do for thee? . . . weary thee . . .
grieve thee?
Lean on my shoulder . . . new burdens to add?
Weep my tears over thee . . . making thee sad?
Oh, hold me not—love me not? let me retrieve
thee!
I love thee so, Dear, that I only can leave thee.

MRS. BROWNING.

TRANSLATIONS FROM HENRICH HEINE.

IM WUNDERSCHÖNEN MONAT MAI.

'TWAS in the glorious month of May,
When all the buds were blowing,
I felt — ah me, how sweet it was! —
Love in my heart a-growing.

'Twas in the glorious month of May,
When all the birds were quiring,
In burning words I told her all
My yearning, my aspiring.

SIR THEODORE MARTIN.

WENN ICH IN DEINE AUGEN SEH'.

DEAR, when I look into thine eyes,
My deepest sorrow straightway flies ;
But when I kiss thy mouth, ah, then
No thought remains of bygone pain.

And when I lean upon thy breast,
No dream of heaven could be more blest ;
But, when thou say'st thou lovest me,
I fall to weeping bitterly.

ALMA STRETTELL.

I.

THOU lovest me not, thou lovest me not!
'Tis scarcely worth a sigh :
Let me look in thy face, and no king in his place
Is a gladder man than I.

II.

Thou hatest me well, thou hatest me well —
Thy little red mouth has told :
Let it reach me a kiss, and, however it is,
My child, I am well consoled.

MRS. BROWNING.

DU BIST WIE EINE BLUME.

E'EN as a lovely flower
So fair, so pure thou art ;
I gaze on thee, and sadness
Comes stealing o'er my heart.

My hands I fain had folded
Upon thy soft brown hair,
Praying that God may keep thee
So lovely, pure, and fair.

KATE FREILIGRATH KROEGER.

I.

THE years they come and go,
The races drop in the grave,
Yet never the love doth so,
Which in my heart I have.

II.

Could I see thee but once, one day
And sink down so on my knee,
And die in thy sight while I say,
“Lady, I love but thee!”

MRS. BROWNING.

SAPHIRE SIND DIE AUGEN DEIN.

Two sapphires those dear eyes of thine,
Soft as the skies above thee ;
Thrice happy is the man to whom
Those dear eyes say : " I love thee."

A diamond is thy heart that gleams
With rays of purest fire ;
Thrice happy is the man for whom
It glows with love's desire.

Two rubies are those lips of thine,
Unrivalled in fresh glory ;
Thrice happy is the man to whom
They whisper their love story.

Could I but find that lucky man,
But meet that happy lover —
Meet him alone in some dark wood, —
His joy would soon be over. . . .

ALMA STRETTELL.

TRISTRAM AND ISEULT.

I.

Tristram.

TRISTRAM.

Is she not come? The messenger was sure.
Prop me upon the pillows once again.
Raise me, my page! this cannot long endure.
— Christ, what a night! how the sleet whips the
pane!
What lights will those out to the northward be?

THE PAGE.

The lanterns of the fishing-boats at sea.

TRISTRAM.

Soft — who is that, stands by the dying fire?

THE PAGE.

Iseult.

TRISTRAM.

Ah! not the Iseult I desire.

* * * * *

What knight is this so weak and pale,
Though the locks are yet brown on his noble head,
Propped on pillows in his bed,
Gazing seaward for the light
Of some ship that fights the gale
On this wild December night?
Over the sick man's feet is spread
A dark green forest-dress ;
A gold harp leans against the bed,
Ruddy in the fire's light.
I know him by his harp of gold,
Famous in Arthur's court of old ;
I know him by his forest-dress, —
The peerless hunter, harper, knight,
Tristram of Lyonesse.

What lady is this, whose silk attire
Gleams so rich in the light of the fire?
The ringlets on her shoulders lying
In their flitting lustre vying
With the clasp of burnished gold
Which her heavy robe doth hold.
Her looks are mild, her fingers slight
As the driven snow are white ;
But her cheeks are sunk and pale.
Is it that the bleak sea-gale
Beating from the Atlantic sea
On this coast of Brittany,
Nips too keenly the sweet flower?
Is it that a deep fatigue
Hath come on her, a chilly fear,

Passing all her youthful hour
Spinning with her maidens here,
Listlessly through the window-bars
Gazing seawards many a league
From her lonely shore-built tower,
While the knights are at the wars?
Or, perhaps, has her young heart
Felt already some deeper smart,
Of those that in secret the heart-strings rive,
Leaving her sunk and pale, though fair?
Who is this snowdrop by the sea? —
I know her by her mildness rare,
Her snow-white hands, her golden hair;
I know her by her rich silk dress,
And her fragile loveliness, —
The sweetest Christian soul alive,
Iseult of Brittany.

Iseult of Brittany? but where
Is that other Iseult fair,
That proud, first Iseult, Cornwall's queen?
She, whom Tristram's ship of yore
From Ireland to Cornwall bore,
To Tyntagel, to the side
Of King Marc, to be his bride?
She who, as they voyaged, quaffed
With Tristram that spiced magic draught
Which since then forever rolls
Through their blood, and binds their souls,
Working love, but working teen?
There were two Iseults who did sway

Each her hour of Tristram's day ;
But one possessed his waning time,
The other his resplendent prime.
Behold her here, the patient flower,
Who possessed his darker hour!
Iseult of the snow-white hand
Watches pale by Tristram's bed.
She is here who had his gloom :
Where art thou who hadst his bloom?
One such kiss as those of yore
Might thy dying knight restore!
Does the love-draught work no more?
Art thou cold, or false or dead,
Iseult of Ireland?

* * * * *

Loud howls the wind, sharp patters the rain,
And the knight sinks back on his pillows again ;
He is weak with fever and pain,
And his spirit is not clear.
Hark! he mutters in his sleep,
As he wanders far from here,
Changes place and time of year,
And his closed eye doth sweep
O'er some fair unwintry sea,
Not this fierce Atlantic deep,
While he mutters brokenly, —

TRISTRAM.

The calm sea shines, loose hang the vessel's sails ;
Before us are the sweet green fields of Wales,

And overhead the cloudless sky of May.

*"Ah! would I were in those green fields at play,
Not pent on shipboard this delicious day!*

*Tristram, I pray thee, of thy courtesy,
Reach me my golden cup that stands by thee,
But pledge me in it first for courtesy."*

Ha! dost thou start? are thy lips blanched like
mine?

Child, 'tis no water this, 'tis poisoned wine!

Iseult! . . .

* * * * *

Ah, sweet angels, let him dream!
Keep his eyelids; let him seem
Not this fever-wasted wight
Thinned and paled before his time,
But the brilliant youthful knight
In the glory of his prime,
Sitting in the gilded barge,
At thy side, thou lovely charge,
Bending gayly o'er thy hand,
Iseult of Ireland!

And she too, that princess fair,
If her bloom be now less rare,
Let her have her youth again,
Let her be as she was then!
Let her have her proud dark eyes,
And her petulant quick replies;
Let her sweep her dazzling hand
With its gesture of command,
And shake back her raven hair

With the old imperious air!
As of old, so let her be,
That first Iseult, princess bright,
Chatting with her youthful knight
As he steers her o'er the sea,
Quitting at her father's will
The green isle where she was bred,
And her bower in Ireland,
For the surge-beat Cornish strand;
Where the prince whom she must wed
Dwells on loud Tyntagel's hill,
High above the sounding sea.
And that golden cup her mother
Gave her, that her future lord,
Gave her, that King Marc and she,
Might drink it on their marriage-day,
And forever love each other, —
Let her, as she sits on board,
— Ah! sweet saints, unwittingly! —
See it shine, and take it up,
And to Tristram laughing say, —
“ Sir Tristram, of thy courtesy,
Pledge me in my golden cup.”
Let them drink it; let their hands
Tremble, and their cheeks be flame,
As they feel the fatal bands
Of a love they dare not name,
With a wild delicious pain,
Twine about their hearts again!
Let the early summer be
Once more round them, and the sea

Blue, and o'er its mirror kind
 Let the breath of the May-wind,
 Wandering through their drooping sails,
 Die on the green fields of Wales;
 Let a dream like this restore
 What his eye must see no more.

TRISTRAM.

Chill blows the wind, the pleasaunce-walks are
 drear:

Madcap, what jest was this, to meet me here?

Were feet like those made for so wild a way?

The southern winter-parlor, by my fay,

Had been the likeliest trysting-place to-day! —

*“ Tristram! — nay, nay — thou must not take my
 hand! —*

*Tristram! — sweet love! — we are betrayed — out-
 planned.*

Fly — save thyself — save me! I dare not stay.”

One last kiss first! — *“ 'Tis vain — to horse —
 away! ”*

* * * * *

Ah! sweet saints, his dream doth move

Faster surely than it should,

From the fever in his blood!

All the spring-time of his love

Is already gone and past,

And instead thereof is seen

Its winter, which endureth still, —

Tyntagel on its surge-beat hill,

The pleasaunce-walks, the weeping queen,
The flying leaves, the straining blast,
And that long, wild kiss, — their last.
And this rough December-night,
And his burning fever-pain,
Mingle with his hurrying dream,
Till they rule it ; till he seem
The pressed fugitive again,
The love-desperate, banished knight,
With a fire in his brain,
Flying o'er the stormy main.
— Whither does he wander now?
Haply in his dreams the wind
Wafts him here, and lets him find
The lovely orphan child again
In her castle by the coast ;
The youngest, fairest chatelaine,
That this realm of France can boast,
Our snowdrop by the Atlantic sea, —
Iseult of Brittany.
And — for through the haggard air,
The stained arms, the matted hair,
Of that stranger-knight ill-starred,
There gleamed something which recalled
The Tristram who in better days
Was Launcelot's guest at Joyous Gard —
Welcomed here, and here installed,
Tended of his fever here,
Haply he seems again to move
His young guardian's heart with love,
In his exiled loneliness,

In his stately, deep distress,
Without a word, without a tear.
— Ah! 'tis well he should retrace
His tranquil life in this lone place;
His gentle bearing at the side
Of his timid youthful bride;
His long rambles by the shore
On winter-evenings, when the roar
Of the near waves came, sadly grand,
Through the dark, up the drowned sand;
Or his endless reveries
In the woods, where the gleams play
On the grass under the trees,
Passing the long summer's day
Idle as a mossy stone
In the forest depths alone,
The chase neglected, and his hound
Couched beside him on the ground.
— Ah! what trouble's on his brow?
Hither let him wander now;
Hither, to the quiet hours
Passed among these heaths of ours
By the gray Atlantic sea, —
Hours, if not of ecstasy,
From violent anguish surely free!

TRISTRAM.

All red with blood the whirling river flows,
The wide plain rings, the dazed air throbs with
blows.

Upon us are the chivalry of Rome ;
Their spears are down, their steeds are bathed in
foam.

“Up, Tristram, up!” men cry, “thou moonstruck
knight!

What foul fiend rides thee? On into the fight!”

— Above the din, her voice is in my ears ;

I see her form glide through the crossing spears. —
Iseult! . . .

* * * * *

Ah! he wanders forth again ;

We cannot keep him : now, as then,

There's a secret in his breast

Which will never let him rest.

These musing fits in the green wood,

They cloud the brain, they dull the blood!

— His sword is sharp, his horse is good ;

Beyond the mountains will he see

The famous towns of Italy,

And label with the blessed sign

The heathen Saxons on the Rhine.

At Arthur's side he fights once more

With the Roman Emperor.

There's many a gay knight where he goes

Will help him to forget his care ;

The march, the leaguer, heaven's blithe air,

The neighing steeds, the ringing blows, —

Sick pining comes not where these are.

— Ah! what boots it, that the jest

Lightens every other brow,

What, that every other breast
 Dances as the trumpets blow,
 If one's own heart beats not light
 On the waves of the tossed fight,
 If one's self cannot get free
 From the clog of misery?
 Thy lovely youthful wife grows pale
 Watching by the salt sea-tide,
 With her children at her side,
 For the gleam of thy white sail.
 Home, Tristram, to thy halls again!
 To our lonely sea complain,
 To our forests tell thy pain.

TRISTRAM.

All round the forest sweeps off, black in shade,
 But it is moonlight in the open glade;
 And in the bottom of the glade shine clear
 The forest-chapel and the fountain near.
 — I think I have a fever in my blood;
 Come, let me leave the shadow of this wood,
 Ride down, and bathe my hot brow in the flood.
 — Mild shines the cold spring in the moon's clear
 light.
 God! 'tis *her* face plays in the waters bright!
 "Fair love," she says, "canst thou forget so soon,
 At this soft hour, under this sweet moon?" —
 Iseult! . . .

* * * * *

Ah, poor soul! if this be so,
 Only death can balm thy woe.

The solitudes of the green wood
 Had no medicine for thy mood ;
 The rushing battle cleared thy blood
 As little as did solitude.
 — Ah! his eyelids slowly break
 Their hot seals, and let him wake ;
 What new change shall we now see?
 A happier? Worse it cannot be.

TRISTRAM.

Is my page here? Come, turn me to the fire!
 Upon the window-panes the moon shines bright ;
 The wind is down ; but she'll not come to-night.
 Ah, no! she is asleep in Cornwall now,
 Far hence ; her dreams are fair, smooth is her brow.
 Of me she recks not, nor my vain desire.
 — I have had dreams, I have had dreams, my page,
 Would take a score years from a strong man's age ;
 And with a blood like mine, will leave, I fear,
 Scant leisure for a second messenger.
 — My princess, art thou there? Sweet, 'tis too late!
 To bed, and sleep! my fever is gone by ;
 To-night my page shall keep me company.
 Where do the children sleep? kiss them for me!
 Poor child, thou art almost as pale as I :
 This comes of nursing long and watching late.
 To bed — good-night!

* * * * *

She left the gleam-lit fireplace,
 She came to the bedside ;

She took his hands in hers, her tears
Down on her slender fingers rained.
She raised her eyes upon his face,
Not with a look of wounded pride,
A look as if the heart complained ;
Her look was like a sad embrace, —
The gaze of one who can divine
A grief, and sympathize.
Sweet flower! thy children's eyes
Are not more innocent than thine.

But they sleep in sheltered rest,
Like helpless babes in the warm nest,
On the castle's southern side ;
Where feebly comes the mournful roar
Of buffeting wind and surging tide
Through many a room and corridor.
— Full on their window the moon's ray
Makes their chamber as bright as day.
It shines upon the blank white walls,
And on the snowy pillow falls,
And on two angel-heads doth play
Turned to each other ; the eyes closed,
The lashes on the cheeks reposed.
Round each sweet brow the cap close-set
Hardly lets peep the golden hair ;
Through the soft-opened lips, the air
Scarcely moves the coverlet.
One little wandering arm is thrown
At random on the counterpane,
And often the fingers close in haste

As if their baby-owner chased
The butterflies again.
This stir they have, and this alone ;
But else they are so still!
— Ah, tired madcaps! you lie still ;
But were you at the window now,
To look forth on the fairy sight
Of your illumined haunts by night,
To see the park-glades where you play
Far lovelier than they are by day,
To see the sparkle on the eaves,
And upon every giant-bough
Of those old oaks, whose wet red leaves
Are jewelled with bright drops of rain, —
How would your voices run again!
And far beyond the sparkling trees
Of the castle-park, one sees
The bare heaths spreading, clear as day,
Moor behind moor, far, far away,
Into the heart of Brittany.
And here and there, locked by the land,
Long inlets of smooth glittering sea,
And many a stretch of watery sand
All shining in the white moonbeams.
But you see fairer in your dreams!
What voices are these on the clear night air?
What lights in the court, what steps on the stair?

2

II.

Iseult of Ireland.

TRISTRAM.

RAISE the light, my page! that I may see her. —

Thou art come at last, then, haughty queen!
Long I've waited, long I've fought my fever;
Late thou comest, cruel thou hast been.

ISEULT.

Blame me not, poor sufferer! that I tarried:

Bound I was, I could not break the band.
Chide not with the past, but feel the present;
I am here, we meet, I hold thy hand.

TRISTRAM.

Thou art come, indeed; thou hast rejoined me;

Thou hast dared it — but too late to save.
Fear not now that men should tax thine honor!
I am dying; build (thou may'st) my grave.

ISEULT.

Tristram, ah! for love of heaven, speak kindly!

What! I hear these bitter words from thee?
Sick with grief I am, and faint with travel;
Take my hand — dear Tristram, look on me!

TRISTRAM.

I forgot, thou comest from thy voyage ;
Yes, the spray is on thy cloak and hair.
But thy dark eyes are not dimmed, proud Iseult !
And thy beauty never was more fair.

ISEULT.

Ah, harsh flatterer ! let alone my beauty !
I, like thee, have left my youth afar.
Take my hand, and touch these wasted fingers ;
See my cheek and lips, how white they are !

TRISTRAM.

Thou art paler ; but thy sweet charm, Iseult,
Would not fade with the dull years away.
Ah, how fair thou standest in the moonlight !
I forgive thee, Iseult ! thou wilt stay ?

ISEULT.

Fear me not, I will be always with thee ;
I will watch thee, tend thee, soothe thy pain ;
Sing thee tales of true, long-parted lovers,
Joined at evening of their days again.

TRISTRAM.

No, thou shalt not speak ! I should be finding
Something altered in thy courtly tone.
Sit — sit by me ! I will think, we've lived so
In the green wood, all our lives, alone.

ISEULT.

Altered, Tristram? Not in courts, believe me.

Love like mine is altered in the breast :

Courtly life is light, and cannot reach it ;

Ah! it lives, because so deep-suppressed!

What! thou think'st men speak in courtly chambers

Words by which the wretched are consoled?

What! thou think'st this aching brow was cooler,

Circled, Tristram, by a band of gold?

Royal state with Marc, my deep-wronged husband, —

That was bliss to make my sorrows flee!

Silken courtiers whispering honeyed nothings, —

Those were friends to make me false to thee!

Ah! on which, if both our lots were balanced,

Was indeed the heaviest burden thrown, —

Thee, a pining exile in thy forest,

Me, a smiling queen upon my throne?

Vain and strange debate, where both have suffered,

Both have passed a youth repressed and sad,

Both have brought their anxious day to evening,

And have now short space for being glad!

Joined we are henceforth ; nor will thy people

Nor thy younger Iseult take it ill,

That a former rival shares her office,

When she sees her humbled, pale, and still.

I, a faded watcher by thy pillow,
I, a statue on thy chapel-floor,
Poured in prayer before the Virgin-Mother,
Rouse no anger, make no rivals more.

She will cry, "Is this the foe I dreaded?
This his idol, this that royal bride?
Ah! an hour of health would purge his eyesight!
Stay, pale queen, forever by my side."

Hush, no words! that smile, I see, forgives me.
I am now thy nurse, I bid thee sleep.
Close thine eyes: this flooding moonlight blinds
them.
Nay, all's well again! thou must not weep.

TRISTRAM.

I am happy! yet I feel there's something
Swells my heart, and takes my breath away.
Through a mist I see thee; near — come nearer!
Bend — bend down! I yet have much to say.

ISEULT.

Heaven! his head sinks back upon the pillow. —
Tristram! Tristram! let thy heart not fail!
Call on God and on the holy angels!
What, love, courage! — Christ! he is so pale.

TRISTRAM.

Hush, 'tis vain: I feel my end approaching.
This is what my mother said should be,
When the fierce pains took her in the forest,
The deep draughts of death, in bearing me.

“Son,” she said, “thy name shall be of sorrow ;
Tristram art thou called for my death’s sake.”
So she said, and died in the drear forest.
Grief since then his home with me doth make.

I am dying. Start not, nor look wildly!
Me, thy living friend, thou canst not save.
But, since living we were ununited,
Go not far, O Iseult! from my grave.

Close mine eyes, then seek the princess Iseult ;
Speak her fair, she is of royal blood.
Say, I charged her, that thou stay beside me :
She will grant it ; she is kind and good.

Now to sail the seas of death I leave thee —
One last kiss upon the living shore!

ISEULT.

Tristram! Tristram! stay — receive me with thee!
Iseult leaves thee, Tristram! nevermore.

* * * * *

You see them clear — the moon shines bright.
Slow, slow and softly, where she stood,
She sinks upon the ground ; her hood
Had fallen back, her arms outspread
Still hold her lover’s hands ; her head
Is bowed, half-buried, on the bed.
O’er the blanched sheet, her raven hair
Lies in disordered streams ; and there,

Strung like white stars, the pearls still are ;
And the golden bracelets, heavy and rare,
Flash on her white arms still, —
The very same which yesternight
Flashed in the silver sconces' light,
When the feast was gay and the laughter loud
In Tyntagel's palace proud.
But then they decked a restless ghost
With hot-flushed cheeks and brilliant eyes,
And quivering lips on which the tide
Of courtly speech abruptly died,
And a glance which over the crowded floor,
The dancers, and the festive host,
Flew ever to the door ;
That the knights eyed her in surprise,
And the dames whispered scoffingly, —
“ Her moods, good lack, they pass like showers !
But yesternight and she would be
As pale and still as withered flowers ;
And now to-night she laughs and speaks,
And has a color in her cheeks.
Christ keep us from such fantasy ! ” —

Yes, now the longing is o'erpast,
Which, dogged by fear and fought by shame,
Shook her weak bosom day and night,
Consumed her beauty like a flame,
And dimmed it like the desert-blast.
And though the curtains hide her face,
Yet, were it lifted to the light,
The sweet expression of her brow

Would charm the gazer, till his thought
Erased the ravages of time,
Filled up the hollow cheek, and brought
A freshness back as of her prime, —
So healing is her quiet now ;
So perfectly the lines express
A tranquil, settled loveliness,
Her younger rival's purest grace.

The air of the December-night
Steals coldly around the chamber bright,
Where those lifeless lovers be.
Swinging with it, in the light
Flaps the ghost-like tapestry.
And on the arras wrought you see
A stately huntsman, clad in green,
And round him a fresh forest-scene.
On that clear forest-knoll he stays,
With his pack round him, and delays.
He stares and stares, with troubled face,
At this huge, gleam-lit fireplace,
At that bright, iron-figured door,
And those blown rushes on the floor.
He gazes down into the room
With heated cheeks and flurried air,
And to himself he seems to say,—
*“ What place is this, and who are they ?
Who is that kneeling lady fair ?
And on his pillows that pale knight
Who seems of marble on a tomb ?
How comes it here, this chamber bright,*

*Through whose mullioned windows clear
The castle-court all wet with rain,
The drawbridge and the moat appear,
And then the beach, and, marked with spray,
The sunken reefs, and far away
The unquiet bright Atlantic plain ?
— What ! has some glamour made me sleep,
And sent me with my dogs to sweep,
By night, with boisterous bugle-peal,
Through some old, sea-side, knightly hall,
Not in the free green wood at all ?
That knight's asleep, and at her prayer
That lady by the bed doth kneel —
Then hush, thou boisterous bugle-peal !
— The wild boar rustles in his lair ;
The fierce hounds snuff the tainted air ;
But lord and hounds keep rooted there.*

Cheer, cheer thy dogs into the brake,
O hunter ! and without a fear
Thy golden-tasselled bugle blow,
And through the glades thy pastime take —
For thou wilt rouse no sleepers here !
For these thou seest are unmoved ;
Cold, cold as those who lived and loved
A thousand years ago.

III.

Iseult of Brittany.

A YEAR had flown, and o'er the sea away,
In Cornwall, Tristram and Queen Iseult lay;
In King Marc's chapel, in Tyntagel old:
There in a ship they bore those lovers cold.

The young surviving Iseult, one bright day,
Had wandered forth. Her children were at play
In a green circular hollow in the heath
Which borders the seashore; a country path
Creeps over it from the tilled fields behind.
The hollow's grassy banks are soft-inclined;
And to one standing on them, far and near
The lone unbroken view spreads bright and clear
Over the waste. The cirque of open ground
Is light and green; the heather, which all round
Creeps thickly, grows not here; but the pale grass
Is strewn with rocks and many a shivered mass
Of veined white-gleaming quartz, and here and there
Dotted with holly-trees and juniper.
In the smooth centre of the opening stood
Three hollies side by side, and made a screen,
Warm with the winter-sun, of burnished green
With scarlet berries gemmed, the fell-fare's food.
Under the glittering hollies Iseult stands,
Watching her children play: their little hands
Are busy gathering spars of quartz, and streams

Of stagshorn for their hats ; anon, with screams
Of mad delight they drop their spoils, and bound
Among the holly-clumps and broken ground,
Racing full speed, and startling in their rush
The fell-fares and the speckled missel-thrush
Out of their glossy coverts ; but when now
Their cheeks were flushed, and over each hot brow,
Under the feathered hats of the sweet pair,
In blinding masses showered the golden hair,
Then Iseult called them to her, and the three
Clustered under the holly-screen, and she
Told them an old-world Breton history.

Warm in their mantles wrapped, the three stood
there,
Under the hollies, in the clear still air, —
Mantles with those rich furs deep glistening
Which Venice ships do from swart Egypt bring.
Long they stayed still, then, pacing at their ease,
Moved up and down under the glossy trees ;
But still, as they pursued their warm dry road,
From Iseult's lips the unbroken story flowed,
And still the children listened, their blue eyes
Fixed on their mother's face in wide surprise.
Nor did their looks stray once to the sea-side,
Nor to the brown heaths round them, bright and
wide,
Nor to the snow, which, though 'twas all away
From the open heath, still by the hedgerows lay,
Nor to the shining sea-fowl, that with screams
Bore up from where the bright Atlantic gleams,

Swooping to landward ; nor to where, quite clear,
The fell-fares settled on the thickets near.
And they would still have listened, till dark night
Came keen and chill down on the heather bright ;
But when the red glow on the sea grew cold,
And the gray turrets of the castle old
Looked sternly through the frosty evening-air,
Then Iseult took by the hand those children fair,
And brought her tale to an end, and found the path,
And led them home over the darkening heath.

And is she happy? Does she see unmoved
The days in which she might have lived and loved
Slip without bringing bliss slowly away,
One after one, to-morrow like to-day?
Joy has not found her yet, nor ever will :
Is it this thought which makes her mien so still,
Her features so fatigued, her eyes, though sweet,
So sunk, so rarely lifted save to meet
Her children's? She moves slow ; her voice alone
Hath yet an infantine and silver tone,
But even that comes languidly ; in truth,
She seems one dying in a mask of youth.
And now she will go home, and softly lay
Her laughing children in their beds, and play
A while with them before they sleep ; and then
She'll light her silver lamp, — which fishermen
Dragging their nets through the rough waves afar,
Along this iron coast, know like a star, —
And take her broidery-frame, and there she'll sit
Hour after hour, her gold curls sweeping it ;
Lifting her soft-bent head only to mind

Her children, or to listen to the wind.
And when the clock peals midnight, she will move
Her work away, and let her fingers rove
Across the shaggy brows of Tristram's hound,
Who lies, guarding her feet, along the ground ;
Or else she will fall musing, her blue eyes
Fixed, her slight hands clasped on her lap ; then
 rise,
And at her prie-dieu kneel, until she have told
Her rosary-beads of ebony tipped with gold ;
Then to her soft sleep — and to-morrow'll be
To-day's exact repeated effigy.
Yes, it is lonely for her in her hall.
The children, and the gray-haired seneschal,
Her women, and Sir Tristram's aged hound,
Are there the sole companions to be found.
But these she loves ; and noisier life than this
She would find ill to bear, weak as she is.
She has her children, too, and night and day
Is with them ; and the wide heaths where they play,
The hollies, and the cliff, and the sea-shore,
The sand, the sea-birds, and the distant sails,
These are to her dear as to them ; the tales
With which this day the children she beguiled
She gleaned from Breton grandames, when a child,
In every hut along this sea-coast wild ;
She herself loves them still, and, when they are told,
Can forget all to hear them, as of old.

Dear saints, it is not sorrow, as I hear,
Not suffering, which shuts up eye and ear

To all that has delighted them before,
And lets us be what we were once no more.
No: we may suffer deeply, yet retain
Power to be moved and soothed, for all our pain,
By what of old pleased us, and will again.
No: 'tis the gradual furnace of the world,
In whose hot air our spirits are upcurled
Until they crumble, or else grow like steel,
Which kills in us the bloom, the youth, the spring;
Which leaves the fierce necessity to feel,
But takes away the power: this can avail,
By drying up our joy in everything,
To make our former pleasures all seem stale.
This, or some tyrannous single thought, some fit
Of passion, which subdues our souls to it,
Till for its sake alone we live and move, —
Call it ambition, or remorse, or love, —
This too can change us wholly, and make seem
All which we did before, shadow and dream.

And yet, I swear, it angers me to see
How this fool passion gulls men potently;
Being, in truth, but a diseased unrest,
And an unnatural overheat at best.
How they are full of languor and distress
Not having it; which when they do possess,
They straightway are burnt up with fume and care,
And spend their lives in posting here and there
Where this plague drives them; and have little ease,
Are furious with themselves, and hard to please.
Like that bald Cæsar, the famed Roman wight,
Who wept at reading of a Grecian knight

Her palfrey's flanks were mired and bathed in sweat,
For they had travelled far and not stopped yet.
A brier in that tangled wilderness
Had scored her white right hand, which she allows
To rest ungloved on her green riding-dress ;
The other warded off the drooping boughs.
But still she chatted on, with her blue eyes
Fixed full on Merlin's face, her stately prize.
Her 'havior had the morning's fresh clear grace,
The spirit of the woods was in her face ;
She looked so witching fair, that learned wight
Forgot his craft, and his best wits took flight,
And he grew fond, and eager to obey
His mistress, use her empire as she may.

They came to where the brushwood ceased, and day
Peered 'twixt the stems ; and the ground broke away
In a sloped sward down to a brawling brook.
And up as high as where they stood to look
On the brook's farther side was clear ; but then
The underwood and trees began again.
This open glen was studded thick with thorns
Then white with blossom ; and you saw the horns,
Through last year's fern, of the shy fallow-deer
Who come at noon down to the water here.
You saw the bright-eyed squirrels dart along
Under the thorns on the green sward ; and strong
The blackbird whistled from the dingles near,
And the weird chipping of the woodpecker
Rang lonelily and sharp ; the sky was fair,
And a fresh breath of spring stirred everywhere.

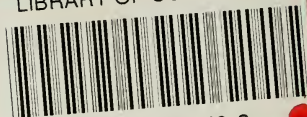
Merlin and Vivian stopped on the slope's brow,
To gaze on the light sea of leaf and bough
Which glistening plays all round them, lone and
mild,

As if to itself the quiet forest smiled.
Upon the brow-top grew a thorn, and here
The grass was dry and mossed, and you saw clear
Across the hollow; white anemones
Starred the cool turf, and clumps of primroses
Ran out from the dark underwood behind.
No fairer resting-place a man could find.
"Here let us halt," said Merlin then; and she
Nodded, and tied her palfrey to a tree.

They sate them down together, and a sleep
Fell upon Merlin, more like death, so deep.
Her finger on her lips, then Vivian rose,
And from her brown-locked head the wimple throws,
And takes it in her hand, and waves it over
The blossomed thorn-tree and her sleeping lover.
Nine times she waved the fluttering wimple round,
And made a little plot of magic ground.
And in that daisied circle, as men say,
Is Merlin prisoner till the judgment-day;
But she herself whither she will can rove —
For she was passing weary of his love.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

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